

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of the reverse side of a US dime. The image focuses on the Presidential Seal, which depicts George Washington in profile, facing right. The word "LIBERTY" is embossed in large, capital letters along the top edge of the coin. The background shows the intricate details of the coin's surface, including the stars and stripes of the American flag.

Liberty

Matt Erickson

Bare Liberty

By:

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On the cover: 1917 'Standing Liberty' Quarter, 'Type I'

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Bare (bâr), adj. Definition #3. **Open to view; unconcealed or undisguised.**

The Random House College Dictionary, Revised Edition, 1980.

Bare Liberty: The proper style of American liberty to strive toward.



Vancouver, Washington

To my loving wife Pam, for all her love and support.

In honor of all those brave patriots who have fought for
Bare Liberty — liberty open to view; unconcealed and undisguised.

Chapter One

At the Afton, Wyoming, ranch he and his extended family had been living since April, Mark Evanston sat along the north wall of the bedroom in the caretaker's cottage, typing away on an old computer which wasn't really much more than a glorified word processor.

Mark's desk was located in a small cubbyhole formed between open rods upon which hung his clothes and those which belonged to his wife, Penny.

On the wall immediately in front of him was his *Patriot Corps Pledge*, Mark's updated listing of grievances facing modern-day Americans, similar in nature to the historic listing originally found in our Declaration of Independence.

If one were to pare down the Declaration's listing of many separate issues facing colonial Americans to a single root cause, one would be left with the phrase which spoke of Britain's "Acts of pretended Legislation" which helped establish "an absolute Tyranny over these States."

Foremost among these Acts of pretended British legislation enacted for the American colonies was the "suspension of our own Legislatures" and the investing with the British king and Parliament the power to legislate for the American colonists "in all cases whatsoever."

These last four words referenced Britain's infamous 1766 Declaratory Act which formally asserted the king's divine right of absolute rule and Parliament's unqualified power to bind the North American colonies "in all cases whatsoever."

All the remaining complaints found within the Declaration of Independence could be traced back to this fundamental British position, that the king and parliament could bind the American colonists without their consent and against their will, on any issue whatsoever.

Ironically, the complaints of American patriots today still stemmed from this same root cause, only now it was our own President and Congress who sought to rule over us absolutely.

It had been two years since Mark had first realized that this historically-significant four-word phrase “in all cases whatsoever” was still the most-important key needed to understand how American liberty was being radically infringed today by excessive government overreach.

Even though our Declaration of Independence acknowledges the tyranny which this four-word phrase caused the American colonists, amazingly this same phrase was inserted — word-for-word — into our own Constitution, later becoming the ultimate loophole under which American tyranny could cleverly develop.

This phrase is found in Article I, Section 8, Clause 17 of our U.S. Constitution, the clause which discusses the type of government allowed for the District which shall become the Seat of Government of the United States; i.e., the District of Columbia. Clause 17 specifically empowers members of Congress to exercise exclusive legislation “in all Cases whatsoever.”

In the government seat, and also in exclusive legislative jurisdiction forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards and other needful buildings, these areas are the only places where one American government exercises all governing power.

Everywhere else throughout the whole of the United States of America, governing power is properly separated by the U.S. Constitution into federal and State authority.

In all the States of the Union, the U.S. Constitution empowers Congress to act in enumerated cases and empowers the members of Congress with the necessary and proper means to implement those enumerated powers.

Within each State, that particular State would of course look to its own State Constitution for primary authority to act.

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The States would also look to the U.S. Constitution to know which powers they had voluntarily ceded to the United States when they ratified the Constitution and which the States are therefore now prohibited from exercising, such as the Article I, Section 10 prohibitions on States from coining money, emitting bills of credit, or making anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts.

Therefore, throughout the Union, two different governments — federal and State — operate in the same physical area. The U.S. Constitution distinguishes when the federal government may operate, reserving to the individual States the remainder of the proper governing powers under their respective State Constitutions which the U.S. Constitution didn't prohibit them from exercising.

But in the U.S. government seat and federal enclaves, these are the only areas where there is no longer any State authority. The governing powers formerly exercised by individual States for these areas were legally transferred to Congress and the U.S. government when the individual States ceded these specific parcels of land, which Congress was allowed to accept by Clause 17 for the named purposes.

In the government seat, Article I, Section 8, Clause 17 now allows members of Congress to exercise the State-like powers which were formerly exercised by States, even though these powers are far beyond the normal limits of federal legislation. In the government seat, in other words, Congress may here exercise *both* federal *and* State-like powers, exclusively, without interference by any State.

Normal constitutional limitations on members of Congress do not apply in this unique federal area because here members of Congress may enact laws under their State-like authority, for such laws are not really 'for' the whole of the United States.

Importantly, these otherwise local laws far beyond the normal limits of the Constitution do not violate it, because the primary purpose of the Constitution was to define and limit the *federal* powers of the Congress and U.S. Government for the whole country.

Thus, despite statements by conservatives to the contrary, members of Congress do in fact have the actual legal power and ability to act far, far beyond their normal constitutional restrictions without violating the Constitution, it is just that these laws are geographically limited in scope to exclusive legislative jurisdiction federal areas.

Members of Congress may here in the government seat even exercise what can be considered *inherent* government powers, because while States must look to their own State Constitutions to know when and how they may legislate within their State, the district constituted as the seat of government of the United States has no similar authorizing document. In the government seat and other exclusive legislative jurisdiction areas, there is only one clause to cover the whole of their authority. And that clause, Clause 17 of the U. S. Constitution's Article I, Section 8, therein authorizes Congress to act "in all Cases whatsoever."

Significantly, neither do the restrictions within the U.S. Constitution which are applicable to 'States' apply to the government seat, because this district is decidedly not a 'State' of the Union, as clearly admitted in the 23rd Amendment.

Thus in the government seat and other exclusive legislative jurisdiction federal areas, members of Congress may exercise a degree of inherent powers wholly opposite in nature from their enumerated powers which they can exercise throughout the whole Union.

Only in the government seat and other exclusive legislative authority jurisdictions does one American government exercise all governing power.

Over the last 200 years, members of Congress have learned to exploit their unique power allowed by Clause 17 for all it is worth, so they may gain vast amounts of wealth and power for themselves and for their closest supporters and allies. In the process, We The People have almost lost our limited government of defined powers.

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Mark's first work, *Monetary Laws of the United States*, looked into the specific example of how our legal tender money originally of only gold and silver coin was deceptively transformed instead to paper currency, although actually only within the government seat. This work, while detailing one example, actually disclosed the process of government overreach in general as but clever deception involving a unique power and ingeniously extending it far beyond its proper limited geographic area.

His latest work, the much shorter *Patriot Quest*, was seeking to show how American patriots can Restore Our American Republic, by finally curtailing Clause 17 powers which have been improperly allowed to run amuck.

As Mark typed away at his computer, he heard the sounds of little feet quickly approaching and then a knock on his door.

"Come in," Mark responded as his eldest grandchild Paige, eight years old, opened the door and hollered "Gramps, Grammy wants you to come out for lunch."

"OK," Mark answered, "Please let your grandmother know I'll be right out."

Mark hit the 'save' button on his computer and walked outside with his characteristic limp which he was perfecting as he awaited another new hip, now for his right side.

As he approached the picnic area, Mark saw stepson Blake Banning at the pond with the four young Banning boys watching, together with Blake's nephew, Ryan. The older boys were hoping to learn how to swing from the rope and make a cannonball into the water.

Penny and her daughter, Bethany, and Blake's wife, Daphne, were setting up lunch at the nearby picnic tables.

"Here comes Gimps, I mean Gramps," blurted out the pregnant Bethany as Mark nominally got within earshot.

Bethany was about half-way through her pregnancy term, evidently becoming pregnant on the last night she had been with her husband before she and her two children had left for Wyoming in April.

Bethany wore her pregnancy well, although she was thankful she was finally over the morning sickness she experienced during her first trimester. Bethany was a proud mama of two adorable children and she would soon deliver another beautiful baby into this world.

"If only Brad were here..." she thought, but he had stayed behind for work, reluctantly agreeing that it would be safest if the remainder of his family went into seclusion to protect them from possible harm from Mark's work which sought to expose the wholesale corruption of our country for immense private gain for a few well-connected individuals.

"I think you're assuming that I can hear from that distance," Mark offered in response to Bethany's jab after seeing Bethany's grin and figuring she was joking around at his expense, even though he hadn't actually heard what she said. "And you know what is said about assuming..."

"Oh, is Gimps also deaf?" offered Bethany, as Mark got close enough to finally hear.

"If you're going to disparage me, you may as well be accurate," responded Mark, knowing he no longer had any defense for jokes about being old and decrepit.

"Of course, if you would have lunch in the house, I wouldn't have had to walk so far," Mark offered, in a poorly-thought-out defense.

"But it is a beautiful day for a picnic," replied Penny. "And besides, a little activity isn't going to kill you; you needn't work day and night everyday on that dang computer. You are surrounded by family you shouldn't always ignore."

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Mark knew better than to set himself up quite so easily, again. But Mark was a creature of habit, and old habits die hard. Besides, it probably wouldn't take long for him to again insert his foot into his mouth. If Mark ever learned anything, it was that he didn't really ever learn any such thing.

But what Penny described as Mark's inherent obstinacy yet proved invaluable as it offered him the persistence needed to discover how generations of greedy scoundrels diverted American government away from the spirit of the Constitution for immense personal gain for themselves and their friends.

Actually, only in this area was it that Mark ever seemed to learn anything new; it was as if he knew he only had a limited amount of brain capacity left to learn new things, so that capacity would be subconsciously saved for his unwavering pursuit to understand deft political maneuvering to legally rob America of her wealth, to surreptitiously transfer extensive public assets into a relatively few private hands.

After Blake informed his boys that Gramps was going to beat them to the table and eat all the food, the Banning boys — Bart, Gary, Bolton and youngest Garrett — rushed toward the table, with all but the youngest sitting down before Gramps.

"Don't eat any food before we pray," Daphne reminded her boys, after which Gramps offered his own words of wisdom, "But that doesn't stop he who gets to the table first from getting the first chance to load up his plate with the best food."

"Aw, Gramps," bemoaned Bolton, who liked things kept at a slower pace, "why do you always rush us so?"

"Because he who starts first and eats the fastest can eat the most," replied Mark, amused with himself.

"Gramps, you're going to give the boys indigestion," Penny scolded.

"I'm teaching them to be efficient with their time," Mark replied.

"No, you're just being obstinate, again," Penny commented, "and a little ornery to boot."

After lunch, Penny suggested a tug-of-war between Gramps on one side and Blake and his boys on the other side.

"How's that fair?" Mark asked.

"Because you still outweigh us all," retorted Blake, with a large smile on his face. But even if it wasn't actually true, Blake's quick comeback was funny and Mark enjoyed a good jab.

"Ouch," Mark replied. "OK, if that's how this game is going to be played, then 'war' it is."

Blake sent the boys to fetch the thickest rope they could find in the barn and they brought it out to a narrow outcropping of the pond which could serve as a dividing line between the two sides.

"Ready...Set...Go!" cried out Penny, as all the Banning boys began immediately pulling Mark toward the water's edge.

"Help me, Paige!" Mark yelled to his closest possible ally.

After getting a nod of approval from her mom, Paige ran to help.

"Ryan, help us against your uncle and cousins!" Mark shouted, hoping the additional help would overcome the opposition.

Ryan ran over to help his sister and Gramps, but the three of them were still no match for the Banning's.

When Mark saw that neither Paige nor Ryan were giving up even as they were being pulled into the water, he knew he must also continue until he too was pulled into the pond.

"We won! We won!" exclaimed Bart as Mark fell into the water. The oldest two of the Banning brothers, seeing the conquered thrash about in the water and not wanting to miss any of the fun, ran to the edge of the pond and jumped in, shouting "Victory!"

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“Fresh-squeezed lemonade for the winners,” cried out Penny, “and cleanup chores for the losers.”

“I guess we’re on K-P duty,” Mark said to Paige and Ryan as they helped pull him out of the water.

“But we gave it our best shot, didn’t we Gramps?” Paige asked rhetorically, “That’s all we really could do, wasn’t it?”

“I guess so, Pip-Squeak, I guess so,” Mark answered. “While we cannot always be assured of the outcome, it is always within our power to give something everything we have, certainly on important issues. We are to provide the effort; God will determine the results, in His own proper time.”

As the food and paper plates were being cleared, those who went for an afternoon swim began drying out under the warm September sun.

As Paige and Ryan helped their grandfather clean up, Mark relayed to them his vision of America, where liberty and justice reigned throughout the blessed land, where government followed the whole Constitution strictly and people were free to pursue their dreams as long as they did not by force or fraud attempt to crush someone else’s.

Bart and Gary came over to listen to their Gramps’ stories and so did the younger two boys, although the latter two were too young to understand much.

“If you four are going to listen, you may as well help us get some work done,” said Mark to the newcomers.

“But Gramps, we won — we don’t have to clean up!” answered Gary, smug from his earlier victory.

“That is true,” replied Mark. “But just because you don’t really ‘have to’ do something doesn’t ever mean that you shouldn’t nevertheless do so for other reasons; sometimes it’s good to just pitch in and offer a hand when and where you can, especially with family.

“The world would be a much darker place if no one ever helped anyone else except when they absolutely ‘had’ to, in order to fulfill some obligation or receive immediate reciprocal benefit. Oftentimes the one who actually does the helping is really the one most benefitted, giving them a sense of purpose and being part of something larger than oneself.

“I don’t really get into the concept of ‘giving back’ or ‘doing good’, as that seems to be done too often simply for public recognition. Mainly I feel compelled to do important things because if I don’t do them, perhaps no one else will either. It’s kind of hard to explain, but I want you to realize that a little extra work out of you, even when it isn’t required or compensated, will undoubtedly help you in life far more than it may actually ever help anyone else.”

Although Mark enjoyed his family’s company and knew that it was important for him to also help steer his grandchildren in the right direction in life, he also knew that he had present work to continue; he wasn’t at the ranch to leisure about while others of his distant work group were busy in the trenches defending America’s founding principles.

“Alright, it’s time for Gramps to get back to work,” Mark offered as the cleanup effort was wrapping up.

“OK, I guess I can’t complain too terribly much about the time you spent with us today,” answered Penny, knowing Mark wasn’t ever any too keen on letting Janet Davidson, Steve Frederickson, Sarah Jacobs, and Peter Dennison bear the brunt of their joint efforts aimed at restoring limited government under strict construction of the whole U.S. Constitution.

Chapter Two

Former U.S. Treasurer Janet Davidson and former U.S. Marshal Steve Frederickson continued to speak in front of their well-attended seminars on the information Mark Evanston had uncovered with the posthumous help of his great-grandfather Mark Adamson and fourth great-grandfather Chester Adamson.

After many decades of operating behind the scenes and under the radar, Peter Dennison had finally come out of the woodwork and put his ample skills to more direct use extending his coalition under the Patriot Corps banner to help rein in federal government overreach.

Investigative reporter Sarah Jacobs continued covering related news in both the newspaper and on television.

These patriots' work was going better than similarly-natured work had before, yet it still seemed to lack a clear, defined sense of direction.

This lack of a clear, direct path for restoring American liberty is what Mark sought to correct with his latest work which was chartering the necessary course to Restore Our American Republic, Once and For All.

Mark's biggest break toward such efforts occurred when he stumbled onto an 1821 supreme Court case which had examined D.C.-based lotteries as they affected neighboring States.

As usual, Mark's interest in the case seemed to differ from all the various attorneys and historians who would have studied that same case over the ages.

The 1821 *Cohens v. Virginia* case helped Mark understand that even laws enacted by Congress under their 'exclusive legislative jurisdiction' are still part of the 'Supreme Law of the Land' under Article VI of the Constitution, since Article I, Section 8, Clause 17 is itself necessarily part of that Constitution.

Therefore, locally-effective laws enacted by Congress can nevertheless be enforced nationwide throughout the whole country, as detailed by the 1821 court.

It wasn't that these laws actually applied throughout the whole country, it was just that when someone broke a local law enacted by Congress for the District of Columbia, then that person could be chased by federal marshals throughout the country if needed, to bring him to justice.

That established principle was the important first step which would later allow Clause 17 to extend tyranny far and wide. Thereafter all that was needed was for U.S. citizens to 'volunteer' to that exclusive legislative jurisdiction, even if they never even visited federal enclaves. While the first principle provided the courts with necessary subject-matter jurisdiction, the second part provided them with jurisdiction over the person, and therefore citizens could now be brought before federal court for breaking those locally-enforceable laws even if the citizen remained in one of the States.

Of course, few people would ever consider the implementation of clever tricks to get Americans to 'volunteer' to that exclusive legislative jurisdiction of Congress 'justice' in any sense of the word.

But that wouldn't stop the government which sought to grow by any means possible, even those merely unique and inherently clever.

The real help the *Cohens* case provided Mark was the Chief Justice's statement that 'proponents for the assertion that laws enacted by Congress for the district *did not bind the nation*' must show the clear constitutional source for their claim.

Mark sadly realized that no express words of the Constitution ever pointedly declared such a concept, even as he would argue the spirit of the whole Constitution, including Clause 17, would necessarily mandate it, if only to give full and proper meaning to the remainder of the Constitution.

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But in this gray area not well-clarified by the Constitution, the courts here, perhaps understandably, tipped their hand to strict *words* of the Constitution, rather than its *spirit*. And those words in Article VI cleared stated that the Constitution and *all* laws made in pursuance of that Constitution are the Supreme Law of the Land.

Without express words in the Constitution which wholly separate the exclusive legislative power from the national powers of Congress, members of Congress have for many generations enacted law predominantly under the single clause where they may exercise nearly unbridled power with few restrictions, since they have been able to get away with it.

While Mark realized that even though he could not now ‘show’ any clear and existing constitutionally-stated rule to back up the claim that exclusive legislative laws enacted by Congress could not be enforced nationwide, he nevertheless knew one could be made.

Mark’s chartered course to restore American liberty was therefore the ratification of a new constitutional amendment which would simply and finally declare very clearly that no law enacted by Congress under their authority under Article I, Section 8, Clause 17 shall be construed to be any part of the Supreme Law of the Land under Article VI, Clause 2.

While this simple corrective phrase may appear powerless to the uninformed, it would keep the exclusive legislative authority of Congress for the government seat and federal forts from ever again being held as the Supreme Law of the Land and thereafter incapable of being extended in any manner whatsoever beyond the actual geographic boundaries of those exclusive legislative jurisdiction areas.

Such an amendment would in effect erect an impenetrable legal fence around the geographic confines of D.C. and other federal enclaves, keeping laws enacted by Congress which should be considered as purely local legislation, thereafter legally enforceable only as local legislation, incapable of ever again being extended throughout the whole country to entrap citizens nationwide.

No longer could people outside of D.C. be forced to abide by the D.C.-based laws enacted by Congress which needn't conform to the normal rules of the Constitution, because members of Congress have always been able to exercise powers in the government seat which are similar in nature as the laws otherwise reserved to States.

Few Americans realize that the Constitution actually created two forms of government which were meant to be wholly distinct and separate — a limited federal government of enumerated powers for the whole country and the separate power of Congress to legislate exclusively for the government seat “in all Cases whatsoever.”

The real *coup d'état*, of course, had been the cunning discovery of how to intermix and comingle those two separate and distinct powers, to ‘allow’ the exclusive legislative jurisdiction to creatively ‘extend’ beyond the limited geographic confines of D.C. and ceded forts.

Mark credited Alexander Hamilton with this fiendish discovery, which Hamilton indirectly outlined in his 1791 opinion on the constitutionality of the bank of the United States, when he was the Secretary of the Treasury.

It was in his 1791 bank opinion that Hamilton showed how Article I, Section 8, Clause 17 authorized Congress to charter a bank, even though Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson and Attorney General Edmund Randolph had both asserted that the proposed banking act was clearly unconstitutional, as members of Congress had no enumerated power to charter a corporation.

But neither Jefferson nor Randolph, like all the strict-constructionists who would later follow in their footsteps, ever thought for a moment to consider the exception to all the normal rules of the Constitution, to see if this exception would allow a banking corporation.

In his bank opinion where he first candidly admitted that Congress had no enumerated power to charter a corporation,

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Hamilton expressly showed how the exception authorized by Clause 17 allowed Congress to create a corporation in the government seat and thus he rested the authority for Congress to charter the bank on that power.

It was in this same banking opinion that Hamilton also enunciated his bold new standard of allowable government actions, essentially as any and all means to authorized ends except those which were expressly prohibited.

28 years later, in the 1819 supreme Court case of *McCulloch v. Maryland*, Chief Justice John Marshall would widely popularize that same bold new means, changing the words ever so slightly but not their intent, as the court upheld the constitutionality of the second bank which had been chartered in 1816 following the War of 1812, actually also only under Article I, Section 8, Clause 17.

This bold new standard developed by Hamilton and popularized by Marshall supported a government of *inherent* powers, capable of doing all that wasn't prohibited.

Ironically its architect was the man who, before ratification of the Constitution, defended a government of only *delegated* powers, in *The Federalist* #84.

In the government of delegated powers, the only allowable means for implementing those powers are detailed in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution, as those means which are both "necessary and proper" to achieve the allowed ends.

That two opposing standards for allowable government action could be promoted by the same man only three years apart can be explained by realizing that the arrogant new standard of *inherent* powers could apply *only* within Clause 17 properties.

Thus, when he wrote of government of limited powers in *The Federalist*, Hamilton spoke of Congress acting under the whole of the Constitution for the whole of the country.

When Hamilton wrote of Congress being able to do anything which wasn't prohibited in his 1791 bank opinion, however, he could only refer to the powers of Congress for the government seat (while cleverly implying that they applied to the whole country).

Marshall also followed Hamilton's lead and used his own legal mumbo-jumbo to make it appear that those words "necessary and proper" had a meaning opposite their natural meaning; implying that the court was so powerful that it had the power to change the meaning of words into their opposite.

But the real success of Marshall's 1819 court opinion was in confusing the matter sufficiently so few people would understand that he too was really only talking about the power of Congress to legislate exclusively in the government seat in all cases whatsoever, where members exercised inherent power except where they were prohibited, as the 1819 court upheld the constitutionality of the (second) U.S. bank, again actually only under Clause 17.

Patriot Quest was Mark's attempt to finally pull back the curtain to expose the supposedly all-powerful wizard as nothing but a monumental fraud, adept only at using smoke and mirrors and a clever sleight of hand to trick the American public into political submission by cleverly intermixing two distinct powers for two different legal jurisdictions, using all those means except as prohibited, improperly for the whole country.

Mark was aiming to release *Patriot Quest* by January 1, 2015, which was the soonest date he could realistically finish the small book.

That release date would also hopefully allow Mark to test the waters for family safety before Bethany would deliver her new son, so she could make it back to her husband so he could be a part of that important event. A side benefit of the January 1st release date was that it would allow Mark to spend the holiday season with his family at the beautiful Wyoming ranch.

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Mark's plans were to then meet up with Peter Dennison, Janet Davidson and Steve Frederickson and bring them up to speed on his latest work and together work out any remaining particulars. Reporter Sarah Jacobs would be invited also; whether she would attend because of her tight schedule remained in question, however.

Penny and the kids and grandkids would stay in seclusion until Mark concluded that there was little chance of harm to them from anyone who stood to suffer a tremendous loss of political and economic power from Mark's research and writings.

Penny was hardly thrilled by the idea of staying behind, but felt better about it when she realized that military families have always faced similar circumstances, as soldiers were pulled away from their families for extended tours of duty even as the soldiers were placed in harm's way.

Penny was thankful Mark wouldn't be going to a war zone where bullets and bombs would fly through in the air, but she also knew from experience that Mark's work angered powerful people who would feel little compunction about seeking retribution for anyone who threatened to stop their golden goose from continuing to lay its golden eggs for them.

Chapter Three

With Thanksgiving behind them, the Christmas season came in full swing to the temporary Wyoming transplants.

To initiate that joyous holiday season properly, Blake hitched up the horses to the wagon. He, Daphne, Bethany, and the five eldest kids of the two families rode into the hills to pick out their Christmas tree. Meanwhile, Penny cared for the youngest, Garrett, by the warmth of the fireplace of the main house, the house which the kids and grandkids had been calling home for the past seven and a half months.

Mark read through his draft of *Patriot Quest* by the fireplace and was pleased with the book, realizing that he would meet his self-imposed deadline for New Year's Day.

"It looks like I will have no problems making the year-end deadline for finishing *Patriot Quest*," Mark said to Penny in a quiet voice as Garrett was fast asleep.

"Is that good?" Penny inquired, not really believing that it was, at least for her and the family.

"It's great," replied Mark, "but it will mean some changes which may not be so easy to get used to."

"So how long are you going to leave me?" asked Penny.

"I wish I had a good answer," replied Mark. "I don't think you'd be in any real danger if you came along, but given the stakes involved, I just think it is best to be cautious, to see how the information plays out for a while before you come out to meet me again in the open," answered Mark.

"Should I be worried about you?" Penny asked, as an involuntary shiver ran up her back and enveloped her shoulders.

"I don't think so," Mark replied.

"So how will we keep in touch?" Penny inquired.

“Like Peter and I do now...by carrier pigeon,” Mark answered dryly.

“You’re not serious, are you?” Penny asked, not really sure if her husband was joking.

“No, I’m just kidding,” Mark retorted, “but it is old-school technology. Do you remember the old 5.25” floppy disks? One typically has to find a computer several decades old before the disks can even be read. We give the disks to trusted friends who shuttle them back and forth between us, or we ship them in boxes with other old knick knacks to help hide their significance. So far it has seemed to work, at least to the best of our knowledge. It certainly isn’t failsafe, but hopefully it’s adequate.”

“It sounds like we weren’t as safe as I thought we have been,” Penny commented.

“If anyone really wanted to find us, it probably wouldn’t have taken them too awfully long,” Mark admitted. “But our seclusion definitely helped me concentrate on my work which is essentially finished.”

“I don’t know if I have much more patience for all this paranoia — the only saving grace is that it has been so fun being around all the grandchildren,” Penny offered. “I have really enjoyed them.”

“Yes, at least you get to spend a lot of time with family, as long as it’s not too much time,” Mark offered with a smile.

“I suppose we all have our moments,” Penny responded, “which is part of the reason why Bethany really wants to go home to Brad. Of course, she also wants Brad to be with her when she delivers her son, which is certainly understandable.”

“I know the clock is ticking as far as Bethany is concerned, but I really want to test the waters regarding family safety before anyone leaves Wyoming,” Mark replied. “Who knows, maybe after that everyone will be able to get back to civilization?”

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“At some point in time, one just has to do what one has to do and accept the consequences,” Penny offered.

“Which is easier said than done, especially if harmful consequences develop,” Mark answered.

“We found our Christmas tree up above the pond,” Blake announced as he walked into the house after cutting down a 12’ Ponderosa Pine tree and bringing it back in the wagon. “We found the tallest one which would yet fit under the vaulted ceiling in the family room. It is sitting out back under the covered porch, for now, drying off.”

“12’ sounds mighty big,” Mark offered. “Is there a tree stand large enough for it?”

“No, the stand in the attic won’t fit anywhere near as large of a diameter of tree as we have, so the boys and I are going to make a metal stand in the shop that will loop over the large bucket we use for cow feed, so we can keep the tree watered,” Blake responded. “It’s just going to be a little bit bigger project than we first thought, but that’s OK. I’ll bring in the tree once I get the stand made.”

“Daphne is going to pop some popcorn and has some dried cranberries which the kids can also string,” Bethany offered. “And I am going to help the kids make paper chains for stringing around the tree, and some paper snowflakes to hang on it.”

“That sounds great,” Penny beamed. “The Christmas cheer is in full swing here. I love it.”

Peter Dennison worked out Mark’s trip back to Washington, D.C. so *Patriot Quest* could be released on January 1, 2015 and so they could hit the ground running following the book’s recommended path to Restoring Our American Republic.

Chapter Four

Penny organized a fantastic Christmas dinner feast; if Mark was going to leave the family behind for a period of time, Penny would ensure that he missed them — and Christmas dinner was a sure way to leave a lasting impression on Mark's stomach.

There was prime rib and a smoked turkey with all the fixings; garlic mashed potatoes and gravy, tossed green salad, stuffing, and a green bean casserole, the latter two which Mark wouldn't touch. Several fresh loaves of braided challah bread also helped fill the mountain lodge with pleasant aromas.

For dessert there was a chocolate-peanut butter torte on a cookie crust, which would help spike Mark's blood sugar into the stratosphere. For appetizers, there was crab dip and crackers along with summer sausage and a variety of cheeses. Chocolate peanut butter balls and almond toffee would also be available to help fill any voids which miraculously managed to remain unfilled.

Christmas morning came early as the grandkids converged on the Christmas tree in search of presents which surely awaited them.

Having two sets of young families each with differing parenting techniques living under the same roof again proved awkward as Christmas brought on a new level of stress.

The Banning boys were discouraged by their parents from paying attention to any Santa-related stories. But Bethany didn't see the harm with her kids as long as they knew the real story of Christmas, not wanting to see her kids miss out on any of the fun which as kids they should be able to enjoy.

"Alright, boys, not so fast," Blake boomed as the boys were on the verge of getting out of hand. "We're going to proceed, one present at a time."

The young children patiently waited their turns, starting with the youngest and working their way to the oldest, before starting in again.

Mark was busy taking photographs to capture the activities.

“Are those pictures to help you remember who we all are?” asked Bethany, not really joking.

“I’m afraid it’s coming sooner than we all think,” replied Mark, in an equally-serious manner.

By nightfall, the main house had been cleaned up from the morning’s events and afternoon meal and all the grandkids had all finally settled down and were getting ready for bed. Mark and Penny said goodnight to all and slowly walked back to the caretaker’s cottage.

“You must be exhausted,” Mark offered, seeing Penny appearing visibly weary.

“Yes, I admit that I’m a bit tired,” Penny responded. “OK, maybe even more than a bit.”

“At least you should sleep well,” Mark replied.

“I hope that will be true, but it too often seems that I just get too wired and still can’t sleep, even though I’m beat,” Penny lamented.

“I don’t seem to have that issue, thankfully,” Mark quipped.

“No, Vincent, you seem to be able to sleep anywhere,” Penny commented, referencing Mark’s late father Vincent, who had passed away the year before from Alzheimer’s. Vincent Evanston was a lifelong farmer who worked long hours and had always fallen asleep within five or ten minutes of sitting down in any chair, long before he was ever diagnosed with any progressive medical condition. He was always full speed ahead or completely stopped, traits which Mark had also been accused of having.

“I’m still a rookie in that department, as compared with my dad,” Mark said.

“But you’re picking up on his bad habits faster than I care to admit,” Penny commented.

“As I like to say, I received what some consider as the worst of both of my parent’s faults, but I consider them among my best qualities, at least in my chosen line of work,” Mark answered.

“Yes, I know,” Penny offered. “But you’re just so exhausting, all the time. You wear me out.”

“What?” Mark asked, as he feigned being shocked. “You meant to say that I keep you young, right? Remember that time when some misguided soul asked if I was your father, even though you are seven years my senior — you seemed to really enjoy that moment.”

“I must say, I did,” Penny mused, as a large smile developed across her face and a twinkle came back to her eyes. “I guess I’d have to say that comments such as that do go a long way to making your pain-in-the-derriere personality tolerable.”

“Pain? You mean ‘pleasure’, right?” asked Mark.

“You’re nothing if not predictable,” answered Penny, resigning herself to the banter which was sure to continue.

Mark was about to respond that predictable meant consistent and therefore reliable when he decided he better let well enough alone and that it was OK to let Penny have the last word, at least this time when she was exhausted from pulling off another successful holiday meal and badly needed rest.

Penny was more than a little surprised that Mark said nothing more; she was at least expecting him to thank her, to note that he was again taking what was meant as an insult instead as a compliment.

Chapter Five

On the morning of December 27th, Blake drove Mark and Penny to the rendezvous site in Salt Lake City, where Mark's ride to Washington, D.C. would pick him up at noon.

December 27th, 2014, was Mark's sister's 59th birthday: Mark still found it hard to believe that his brother and sisters were all over 50 years old and that Mark himself would be 53 on his next birthday in March. "Where did all the time go?" he wondered as Blake continued driving them towards their immediate destination.

"You look deep in thought," Penny commented, as she brought Mark back into the moment, seeing his mind was clearly somewhere else.

"Sorry," Mark offered, not wanting to ignore his wife he wouldn't be seeing for at least a month or two, maybe longer. "I was realizing that today is Diane's 59th birthday. Time sure seems to be going by fast."

"Yes it is," Penny replied, fully cognizant herself of the advancing years. "Diane should have received the birthday card I left with Sheila to send out, since I left a box of cards with my sister for the year, to have her mail them out for us so no one would have any leads on our present location if we sent them from here."

"Yes, thank you so much for taking care of things like that in advance," said Mark. "So how long are we covered for with birthday and holiday cards, just so I know?"

"For a year, from our departure," replied Penny. "So we're good for another four months."

Blake arrived at the meeting site — the Mormon Tabernacle's Temple Square — not that they were Mormon, but the site's hustle and bustle which would allow them to remain hidden while in plain sight, not that anyone was actively looking for them.

The R.V., staffed with two drivers who would take turns driving straight through to their destination, was already waiting for Mark by the time they pulled up at 11:30 am. Blake carried Mark's luggage to the motorhome as Penny and Mark began saying their goodbyes.

The weather in Salt Lake City, for the time of year, wasn't any too bad. It was 27 degrees out, with overcast skies, good visibility and moderate winds. The major roads were well-maintained and the drivers would be proceeding forth cautiously, making sure they made respectable time but in no particular hurry, to best ensure safe arrival at their destination.

"Well, Old Man," Blake began. "It looks like you are all set. Take care of yourself and our prayers will be with you as you attempt to help steer the government ship back onto its proper constitutional course."

"Thank you," said Mark. "And you take care and watch over the whole family. And be nice to your mother — treat her well."

"Not too well," Blake responded. "I don't want her to faint or have a heart attack or anything like that. It's not like she's used to being treated well with you around."

"Ouch," Mark replied. "I don't treat you that poorly, do I, Dear?"

"Oh, it's not that," Penny answered. "It's more that you don't pay enough attention to even let me know that you realize that I am around."

"I know I retreat into my own world far too often and too deeply," Mark admitted. "However, I have no intention of ever neglecting you."

"I know, Dear," Penny affirmed. "And I love you anyway."

"Thank the Good Lord for that," Mark answered, not wanting to stir up the pot any more than necessary at the moment.

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With their final goodbyes given and a long hug, Mark entered the R.V. and the driver pulled away from the curb and headed to the freeway for the long journey east on I-80.

Mark sat on the couch and read again through *Patriot Quest* a final time. Satisfied with it, he set the work aside and began going over Peter Dennison's proposed agenda for New Year's Day, as well as rough guideline of activities Peter had lined up for them over the month of January.

Mark had sent Peter digital copies of *Patriot Quest* at various stages and what proved to be the final version a few days earlier, so Peter should be up to speed on Mark's outlined path for restoring liberty and justice once and for all.

Mark and Peter hadn't really had much of a chance yet to discuss the book, so they planned to meet in D.C. at noon on Monday, December 29, along with Janet Davidson and Steve Frederickson.

Mark's trip east proceeded well, with the two drivers taking turns keeping the R.V. headed in the proper direction. The wife of the senior driver was also along for the trip, and she kept the food coming at the appropriate times and kept everything neat and tidy.

The primary stops were for fuel, but they also stopped occasionally at a few rest areas to get out and stretch their legs and enjoy the fresh cool air.

The roads, especially in higher elevations, were often snow-covered and the R.V.'s automatic tire chains came in handy on several occasions.

As they drove through Cheyenne, Wyoming, it was readily apparent that the weather was much colder and the winds were blowing much stronger. The motorhome had to slow another 15 m.p.h. to keep the wind from blowing it off the road.

At least the visibility remained decent and the R.V. was well-stocked with food, emergency supplies and a generator if things got too dicey to continue driving.

Several seven-gallon water jugs were kept inside the motorhome, in case the water lines proved insufficiently insulated to keep the water flowing through the pipes.

Making it to Omaha, Nebraska by early morning on Sunday, December 28th, the weather had warmed considerably and the winds had died down, easing the way for making much better time on the freeway as the day wore on.

Although they weren't yet half-way in their mileage, they hoped they were half-way through with their driving time, as they hoped the predicted coming warmer weather would allow them to make better speeds on the second half of their journey.

During the daylight hours, Mark kept his nose buried in his work, other than at meal-time, when he would converse with the driver on relief or the hostess.

When Mark went to sleep Sunday night, he knew that when he awoke he would be close to his destination. Mark was lulled to sleep by the gentle rocking of the motorhome as it steadily ate up the road which presented before it.

On Monday, December 29, 2014, the crew pulled into Germantown, Maryland, and headed to the local Wal-Mart transfer point for meeting Mark's shuttle driver who would take him the final leg of his journey to the nation's capital by car.

The transfer driver was waiting when they pulled up, having been given a heads-up on their estimated arrival time several hours earlier by Mark's relief driver.

Mark thanked the motorhome crew for their careful driving, superb care and comfort, and bid them a fond farewell.

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It was 10:00 a.m., so hopefully the traffic into the city would prove tolerable, being outside peak rush-hour.

“We should make it to the city in a little more than an hour, so you should easily make your lunch appointment at Union Station,” commented the driver. “With all the hustle and bustle there at lunch time in the food court, it will be difficult enough to hear yourself talking, so it should be difficult for anyone outside your table to overhear your conversations.”

“As long as we can hear one another,” replied Mark, anxious to meet up again with Peter, Janet and Steve.

Mark was dropped off in front of the station, and went to Johnny Rockets in the lower level food court where he was to meet up with the others.

Union Station was impressive, both from a distance as one drove up to it and on the inside as one looked around at its ornate construction.

The station was very busy, serving as a hub for the Amtrak trains, Metro rail and bus systems, in addition to other local modes of transportation which either brought people into the city and/or helped shuttle them about before everything was put into reverse as people fled the city back to their homes or area hotels.

Mark saw Janet, Peter, and Steve in a corner booth and Sarah Jacobs was there also, along with Steve’s brother Randy, who was in charge of security for the Patriot Corps. With more room on the ladies’ side of the table, Mark squeezed in with them for a cozy meal.

After lunch was ordered and pleasantries completed, Peter informed Mark that the whole group had read through the final version of *Patriot Quest* and that they were anxious to begin promoting its recommendations but that they had some questions.

Mark reiterated that while the proposed amendment was the long-term goal, their main efforts would still consist primarily of

educating Americans as to the exact manner which had enabled Congress and the U.S. government to ignore so much of the Constitution for so long. “Our primary job will necessarily be to explain the need for the amendment, why it is necessary and proper,” he repeated.

“I’m afraid I don’t see that your amendment would do all that much if it were enacted,” stated Sarah.

“You mean ‘ratified’,” Mark clarified. “Congress enacts Laws; States ratify proposed amendments.”

“Yes, I knew that,” replied Sarah, slightly embarrassed by her rookie blunder.

“As you all readily know, members of Congress and U.S. government officers have taken what was meant to be a wholly separate and distinct power for specified and limited geographic areas and, in effect, loosened those borders to effectively cast that exclusive legislative jurisdiction nationwide throughout the whole country,” Mark began.

“Well, this amendment, once ratified, would finally prohibit any law enacted in these federal enclaves, even though enacted by Congress, from ever again being considered as one the Supreme Laws of the Land,” Mark continued. “The effect of ratifying this amendment would be to prohibit Clause 17 laws from ever again being enforced nationwide, even only indirectly. This amendment would keep laws which were really meant to be local now finally local also in strict legal effect.

“The passage in the 1821 *Cohens* Court, which charged proponents for the theory, that exclusive legislative jurisdiction laws do not bind the whole nation, to point out those words in the Constitution which expressly supported their theory, was my light-bulb moment which clicked in my mind.

“While the spirit of the whole Constitution would necessarily mandate such restriction — if only to give proper effect to the

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remainder of the Constitution — no words in the Constitution actually ever spell it out. Actually, the words of the Constitution, in Article VI, say that the Constitution and *all* the laws made in pursuance of it are all the Supreme Law of the Land.

“Since Article I, Section 8, Clause 17 is part of the Constitution, then laws enacted under that clause also form part of the Supreme Law of the Land. Therefore the judges of every State shall be bound thereby, anything in their own State Constitutions to the contrary notwithstanding.”

“And that is what has fouled up so many Tenth Amendment proponents, who correctly point out that under their States’ reserved powers, many of the topics which were supposed to be dealt with by the States have been taken over by the federal government,” commented Peter.

“Precisely,” Mark replied. “Within the States, each State is supposed to be able to exercise its reserved powers without federal interference. That really was the purpose of the Constitution, to clearly identify which issues are federal and then leave the remainder of issues for the States, to keep these separate-but-interrelated legal jurisdictions separate and distinct.

“But when States began individually ceding their governing powers to Congress for D.C. or forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards and other needful buildings scattered throughout the several States, thereafter members of Congress became empowered to exercise exclusive legislative authority in those enclaves by terms of those State cessions of land and, of course, under and by the express allowance of Clause 17.

“Sadly the courts have neither helped keep the powers which Congress may operate within the District of Columbia and the other enclaves separate from the powers members of Congress may operate throughout the whole country.

Neither have the courts ever pointedly admitted that Clause 17 is what has allowed the government and Congress to act so boldly. Through their silence, the courts have been complicit with keeping this power misunderstood and essentially unknown, at least outside of acknowledging only the clause's original purposes.

"This exploitation has allowed the federal government to do nearly anything it desires, to essentially now do everything except what is expressly prohibited."

"Yes, the normal State jurisdiction is being interfered with by the power which the several States individually ceded to Congress for exclusive legislative areas," commented Peter. "And patriots looking to the Tenth Amendment for protection can't figure out why those clear words of the Tenth Amendment reserving the States their powers are being ignored by the courts."

"Patriots have always figured, incorrectly, that the problem has been that the courts give standard clauses of the Constitution twisted new meanings, thereby allowing the federal government to run amuck over the States. Never have patriots realized that such a theory is preposterous, instead that members of Congress are actually only using their authority for federal enclaves received from the States directly, as allowed by Clause 17."

"Exactly," replied Mark. "Congress and the courts have gone to great lengths to imply that government overreach rested on creative interpretations of the general welfare clause, the commerce clause, the necessary and proper clause, or the Supremacy clause, all supposedly given fanciful and creative new 'interpretations' by courts so powerful that they can change the meanings of words to authorize new governing powers."

"In reality, government overreach rests almost exclusively on Article I, Section 8, Clause 17, as I show in my examination of the monetary powers in *Monetary Laws*.

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“Only in these lands do members of Congress have what can be said to have inherent powers; I say ‘inherent’ because members of Congress don’t have a (State) Constitution to contend with which defines their allowed parameters for local action as States have when they exercise their State powers.

“Instead of a whole State Constitution to define and limit their allowed local powers, members of Congress are provided but one clause, allowing them to instead exercise power “‘in all Cases whatsoever’.

“Since laws enacted by Congress under this clause need not follow normal constitutional restraints, these laws are not actually ‘unconstitutional’, at least provided their actual legal jurisdiction is limited to D.C. and federal enclaves.”

“And that is what trips everyone up,” replied Peter. “How federal laws sourced in the local legislative power for D.C. nevertheless somehow get extended across the country, entrapping Americans no matter where they live. As it is now, members of Congress have their cake and get to eat it too; they get to exercise what should be local powers but then cleverly extend them nationwide.”

“Truthfully, I’m still not really sure how someone in Pennsylvania can break one of the Clause 17 laws of Congress when they are in Philadelphia or Pittsburgh, rather than in a federal enclave,” responded Randy, the least-versed of the group on legal matters.

“That is the same question I keep coming up against time and again, and I don’t know if I ever really have what I consider an accurate response which is simple to convey,” said Steve.

“The various mechanisms of entrapment to D.C.-based laws outside of D.C. are of fundamental concern, but I haven’t spent much time studying them because I come from the position that a little knowledge in this area is extremely dangerous, because it leads impatient people to place themselves directly in harm’s way.

“Anyone who tries to individually extricate himself or herself from Congress’ exclusive legislative jurisdiction while actually in a State becomes a target, and they may well be made an example of in federal court. I’m not saying it is impossible to succeed, but a hundred years of court precedent are heavily stacked against them.

“Rather than spending years studying the nefarious snares which inadvertently ‘volunteer’ oneself to D.C. laws even while one resides in the States — realizing there are still probably dozens or hundreds of other traps out there to keep anyone from being able to fully remove oneself from that devilish jurisdiction — I choose to spend my efforts drawing proper attention to that improper jurisdiction, so that collectively we may ratify an amendment which would finally withdraw D.C.-based laws enacted by Congress from being part of the Supreme Law of the Land, *for everyone*.

“Why have 300 million Americans each act independently when we can have but one battle and get it over with once and for all, for all time and on all issues?

“The same goes with State action, such as nullification issues. Why have 50 battles on every issue, when one final battle fought correctly can win the war on every issue, forevermore?

“After ratification, none of these false laws could be enforced outside of the actual, physical jurisdiction of D.C. or any enclave, in any case. Federal authorities in purely local matters for federal enclaves would have to seek extradition of local criminals from the States, just like other local jurisdiction matters of the States.”

“So tell me more about how your proposed amendment would work,” Sarah requested.

“It follows the example of the 11th Amendment which was ratified in 1795, which detailed how some of the judicial jurisdiction for the federal courts as originally outlined in the Constitution must be thereafter construed.

“The supreme Court had ruled in 1793 against the State of Georgia in *Chisholm v. Georgia*, that States could be sued in federal court by citizens of other States because of the literal words in Article III, Section 2, Clause 1.

“And, given those original words of the Constitution which provided federal judiciary jurisdiction in cases where a citizen of another State wanted to sue that other State in federal court, I would have agreed with that 1793 court’s strict interpretation, an interpretation which the States evidently never meant.

“The States quickly ratified the 11th Amendment in two short years to let that court and everyone else know how those words of Article III must thereafter be construed, at the same time clearly showing that it is not the majority of the supreme Court who have the final say on the ultimate meaning of the Constitution, but three-fourths of the several States.

“The effect of ratification of my Once and For All Amendment would be to now tell the courts, and everyone else, how another of the constitutional clauses must thereafter be construed, Clause 17.

“The Once and For All Amendment would finally sever the liberally-enforced link between D.C. and people found in the several States.

“Although even after ratification of this Once and For All Amendment people in the States could still theoretically volunteer to that D.C. authority — but now only in an overt and intentional manner, such as to receive some direct federal benefit for example — no longer could State citizens be tricked or otherwise forced to that alternative federal jurisdiction without their true, overt consent.

“Nor could people throughout the States be forced to pay for federal programs allowed only under that exclusive jurisdiction, unless they willingly chose to receive those allowed benefits.

“With ratification, no longer could D.C.-based laws enacted by Congress forcefully apply anywhere outside the exclusive legislative jurisdiction areas.

“The proposed amendment, as it now stands, would not eliminate the District of Columbia, nor the ability of Congress to still legislate exclusively for that area in all cases whatsoever, it would just finally keep those expansive laws appropriately circumscribed to that jurisdiction.”

“Maybe I’m a little dense, but I still don’t know if I fully understand the ramifications involved, how your amendment would actually work,” said Randy.

“Ok, let’s look at things differently. If my Once and For All Amendment ultimately proved to be a failure, i.e., if sneaky government officials and clever members of Congress somehow yet found a creative way around it, I have a final recommendation to truly do the job, without fail.

“In that case, instead of simply limiting D.C.-based laws finally only to D.C. and federal enclaves, I would recommend outright repeal of Article I, Section 8, Clause 17, which I ultimately think would be the proper thing to do anyway, given its terrible damage which it has caused our country over so long of a period of time.

“But I would really only recommend repeal following some interval of time after ratification of my Once and For All Amendment, to help ease the transition from one extreme of government to its opposite. We currently operate a federal government essentially without limits, but going back to one so extremely limited in nature that few Americans would recognize it would perhaps be a severe strain on many Americans. Going back to the original view of the federal government as it was originally envisioned by the framers and ratifiers of the Constitution hundreds of years ago could come as quite shock to many Americans, both in and out of government.

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“Repeal follows the outline given by the 21st Amendment — which repealed the 18th Amendment which had imposed the prohibition of alcohol — and we wholly repeal the power of Congress to exercise exclusive legislation *even in the government seat and other federal enclaves*.

“Repeal would thereafter eliminate the ability of Congress to legislate in any manner *other than that provided for the whole Union*. There would no longer be an alternative form of government under which Congress could choose to act.

“As it stands now, there are actually three forms of government in the United States. First, there is the form of limited federal government of enumerated powers for exercising throughout the whole country, which is seldom ever used today.

“Second, there is the form provided by the several State governments who exercise the remainder of allowable governing powers within their respective States.

“Lastly, there is that same local power originally reserved to the States, but now individually ceded by the States to Congress and the U.S. Government for D.C., and for forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards and other needful buildings.

“It is under this last power which the federal government has predominantly operated now for well over a century, since it imposes so few limitations upon Congress and the U.S. Government that they can do pretty much most anything they want.

“With repeal, however, that third form of government is gone completely and is longer an option for the federal government, at any time, anywhere. Congress could no longer *ever* exercise any State-like powers, *anywhere*. No longer would there be a federal government seat or enclave; no longer would there be any area which was not under the governing jurisdiction of some State, although this would not here directly relate to territories under Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2, which is another matter.

“With repeal, thereafter all government power would finally be divided only into the first two forms of government, into either federal or State jurisdiction, *everywhere* throughout the whole country.

“Thus, with repeal, things are much simpler. With repeal of Clause 17, members of Congress no longer have inherent government powers into which they can tap; they only have their enumerated powers for the whole country, period.

“As it stands now, people believe that government officials and members of Congress can ignore the Constitution with impunity and simply make up the rules as they go along; that they have all power except that which is expressly prohibited, everywhere. While members have such power for the government seat and federal enclaves, such a theory that this power directly extends throughout the whole country is preposterous.

“It is an utter fallacy to assert that the Constitution which creates the government and empowers it doesn’t simultaneously constrain it. One cannot separate the constraints on government from the grants of power which create government. Either a government of limited, enumerated powers exists or no government has been created. The Constitution cannot and did not create a government which may then act within its own absolute discretion at all times, everywhere.

“The Constitution only created a government with near absolute discretion only for the seat of government and federal enclaves.

“All powers now exercised by the federal government which appear to ignore their constitutional constraints or seemingly rely upon absurd interpretations of various words found in the Constitution necessarily rely upon Clause 17, and only Clause 17, where Congress may act with few restrictions.

“Within federal enclaves, the powers from which members of Congress may choose far exceed their expressly-enumerated powers which are granted for action throughout all the States.

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“The powers members of Congress may exercise within federal areas are actually granted by the individual States themselves as individual States ceded individual properties for constitutionally-allowed purposes. The exclusive legislation powers are allowed by Clause 17 of the U.S. Constitution, but their origin is from the States individually in those State cessions of land.

“Under these State-granted powers received directly through the individual States, outside of the Constitution, Congress may enact laws similar in nature as the State would have exercised, but again it is important to note that none of the U.S. Constitution’s restrictions on States apply to federal areas, because these areas are no longer any part of any State of the Union.

“With repeal of Clause 17, the District of Columbia would either be allowed to become the 51st State of the Union, or be retroceded back to Maryland, just like the Alexandria portion of D.C. which was originally part of the ten-miles-square jurisdiction for the district was retroceded back to Virginia in 1846.

“Upon repeal, all exclusive legislative jurisdiction forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards, and other needful buildings found in each State would necessarily be retroceded back to the State which originally ceded them in each individual case, because none of these areas beyond the nation’s capital have ever been organized sufficiently to form even their own local government, let alone a free-standing State.

“But repealing Clause 17 would be tough on many American citizens, for even though repeal would eliminate the gargantuan government overreach in one fell swoop, everyone would be forced to quit cold turkey all federal programs which have been enacted solely under Clause 17.

“Repeal would act like a kill switch immediately eliminating all invalid government action in excess of strict construction of the whole Constitution.

“Repeal of Clause 17 and elimination of D.C. and its exclusive legislative jurisdiction is also a harsh step because clauses of the Constitution should not be repealed or changed lightly. It is proper to take a precautionary approach anytime one seeks to modify the Constitution.

“That’s why I recommend my current Once and For All Amendment, at least first and on a transitional basis, rather than jumping immediately to outright repeal, even though the latter is really the *true* Once and For All — no turning back — Amendment to forever restore limited government within the United States of America.

“I’m quite confident that the intermediate step of merely making the local legislative power of Congress truly local will work along the lines originally envisioned by the Constitution’s framers and ratifiers, and it allows all those Americans who wish to stay on current federal programs the opportunity to nominally receive all the benefits which were so long promised them, while it also allows those wishing to bail out of such social welfare programs the unfettered right to finally do so.”

“So this little amendment of yours is that powerful?” asked Sarah.

“Yes, it is not as harsh or final as repeal, but it will keep the power of Congress which can be traced back to the State cessions of lands from ever being used beyond those ceded areas again,” answered Mark.

“Proper harmony between federal and State governments mandates proper and strict constitutional separation of governing authority everywhere and at all times: federal concerns named throughout the Constitution have national priority everywhere, local powers exercised by each State are kept within each State’s borders, and the local powers exercised by Congress in federal enclaves must finally be kept within those borders, if they are allowed to continue at all.

“Such action will restore the Tenth Amendment to its proper glory, as well as the remainder of the Constitution. We shouldn’t have ever allowed one clause to overrun every other. It is time to finally limit Clause 17 to its rightful role or forever eliminate it altogether for the severe damage it has already done.”

“I don’t know about everyone else,” Randy offered, “but I’m worn out. I’m mentally exhausted from trying to keep everything sorted out.”

“Me too,” offered Sarah.

“It sounds like it is a good time to call it a day,” offered Peter. “But I would like to meet again tomorrow, Mark, after I sort out some of your comments. I want to contemplate a few things and then discuss matters further.”

“Sure, no problem,” answered Mark, as the meeting adjourned and the patriots went their own ways.

Sarah Jacobs went about completing her story for the New Year’s Day edition of *The Washington Sentinel*.

Steve Frederickson coordinated with his brother Randy for protection for the upcoming press conference, Randy being an old veteran of such activities for the Secret Service.

Janet Davidson readied websites, drafted news releases, and finalized marketing strategies for the January 1st kickoff of *Patriot Quest*.

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Peter and Janet met Mark for breakfast the next day, and Randy and Steve joined them also. Sarah was busy working on her articles which had a deadline fast approaching and she would call Mark if she needed further clarification.

“Yesterday you talked about your Once and For All Amendment,” Peter began, “and also you talked about the alternate strategy of outright repeal of Clause 17. But you backed away from the latter, in part because you thought it would be too tough on too many private citizens to quit cold turkey federal programs which would necessarily be eliminated with repeal of Clause 17.”

“Right,” replied Mark. “But there are other issues with repeal; the least of which is that you’d also have every government official who would be thrown out of a job really fighting you tooth and nail every step of the way, even more than if one simply worked to finally contain their exclusive legislative power.

“Limiting Clause 17 to its rightful jurisdiction would seem like a prudent interim step which should still solve government overreach, but without polarizing quite so many people into opposing camps with such total win or total lose options.”

“OK, I get that and do not necessarily object, although a ‘total win’ sounds very appealing to me, first of all because no one has ever before believed it was even possible, even only in theory,” continued Peter. “Now with repeal, you said that one option would be for D.C. residents to form a new State, nominally New Columbia.”

“Yes,” answered Mark.

“OK,” said Peter. “What if we went with repeal and D.C. residents went ahead and formed their own new State, but instead of disbanding all the federal programs, instead they sought to continue the more popular ones under their State authority, hiring laid-off federal employees who have long already performed those jobs and know them well?

“But not only that, what if this new State with the proven employee experience of running these intricate government programs offered their services to other States who wanted to offer their own citizens this coverage but who didn’t yet have the expertise of running such a program?”

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“I hadn’t ever thought of that before,” answered Mark, as he pondered the ramifications. “Of course, Congress would have to approve those inter-state compacts, under Article I, Section 10, Clause 3, but that shouldn’t be much of issue, especially given the past culpability of Congress in the whole affair, and especially if things were done on an interim basis or with sunset provisions which would terminate them in a set number of years, perhaps seven.

“Repeal would necessarily eliminate federal government overreach, which, of course, would be absolutely fantastic. And government which no longer feared its citizens discovering the true source of its awe-inspiring but otherwise extremely fragile power will soon prove more worthy of their trust.

“With the State governments holding the balance of the reserved governing powers under the Tenth Amendment, they are naturally the entities to consider offering any kind of safety net for their citizens, and being closer to those citizens, will more likely know their true needs.

“But most importantly, without improper federal mandates requiring uniformity throughout the Union on issues not federal in nature as determined by the Constitution, each State may proceed on its own, according to its own parameters in conformity with its own State Constitution.

“Undoubtedly some States would choose to keep government quite limited and thus defer to each citizen the individual responsibility to provide for themselves and their families.

“Individuals who subscribed to such philosophies would naturally be drawn to those liberty-minded States, offering freedom-oriented Americans choices they simply do not have today.

“With 50 States in the Union, individuals could more easily choose to live in a State which most-closely resembled their own belief system.

“Those individuals who preferred additional services could move to a State which offered them, which State of course would have to charge for the services directly, rather than through current federal means which would necessarily be eliminated.

“50 States competing with one another by offering varying levels of limited government and individual freedom would naturally limit the extent which those who would otherwise be inclined toward the opposite end of the spectrum could hope to achieve, destroying the uniform monopoly now imposed by federal mandates heavily tilted toward government oppression.

“Overall, I like your idea, Peter; it has a lot of merit. And eliminating Clause 17 certainly simplifies inter-governmental relations between the federal government and the States.

“Repeal with admission of a new State for D.C. had been my third option, after repeal with retrocession in second place and my Once and For All Amendment was my most-favored choice,” Mark offered. “But you raise some interesting points which may ultimately change my thoughts and preferences. But there are other concerns which are even more important.”

“Before you get to those other concerns,” Janet interjected, “I have a question. Why not simply ratify some new amendments to finally give new enumerated powers to Congress legitimately, and leave the programs federal?”

“One could,” offered Mark. “But I would argue that the government which took a politically-expedient, back-door approach to circumvent the spirit of the Constitution and undercut every founding principle of our country rather than simply pursue new amendments in the first place as originally outlined under Article V should absolutely NOT be given *more* powers, certainly not at least until it first proves itself again trustworthy.

“But even more importantly, neither do we need all 50 States of the Union being forced into the same welfare-State mold.

Bare Liberty

“Personally, I much prefer to keep the federal government properly limited in scope and allow the States to individually implement any programs they deem worthy which the federal government currently operates in an improper manner.”

“And before we continue further, I have one question on the subject of repeal,” interrupted Steve, rightfully concerned with national defense. “With repeal, Mark, it appears that you are suggesting the elimination of all federal forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards, and perhaps even other needful buildings. But don’t we need them?”

“Yes, we need them, or at least many of them; but no, I am not suggesting their elimination. Repeal of the exclusive legislative jurisdiction for these areas does not eliminate these areas in and of themselves,” replied Mark. “It only deals with who exercises the governing authority over these areas; i.e., whether it is Congress or a State. This question does not pertain to who owns the land or how those lands are used.

“In 1956, a federal intergovernmental agency panel looked extensively into the growing issue of federal enclaves not having State government involvement. People living in these exclusive legislation federal areas couldn’t access normal State and local services, dealing with issues such as voting, schooling, marriage, State courts for dispute resolution, divorce, police, fire protection, utilities, etc.

“And the federal government did not offer these services outside of D.C. It was a real problem for residents scattered about in all the federal enclaves throughout the States, these areas which legally aren’t within a State.

“The panel corresponded with all the pertinent federal agencies having exclusive legislative properties under their nominal control and many State agencies to learn their thoughts, and, time-after-time, the federal agencies said that the safety and security of even sensitive areas, including military bases and critical research facilities, were not in any way impacted by legislative jurisdiction; i.e., that it did not

matter whether the lands were under State authority or under the exclusive legislative authority of Congress.

“Indeed, the panel pointed out that only 41% of Army bases, 36% of Navy bases and only 10% of Air Force bases were under this exclusive authority anyway, with the remainder having always been under State jurisdiction.

“The report concluded that all legislative control should be retroceded back to the States of all lands other than the District of Columbia, allowing D.C. because only in D.C. had a local governing body been there established to handle local affairs, which at that time was a board of commissioners.

“And remember, just because members of Congress have allowed a board of commissioners, or a mayor and city council, or other form of local government to enact truly local legislation in D.C., the Constitution itself invests exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever *with Congress*.

“Thus Congress may ultimately change or repeal any of those locally-imposed laws, or Congress may eliminate the local form of government there, as they have done repeatedly. In other words, any local form of government for D.C. created by Congress is constitutionally-irrelevant, as far as we are concerned about overall constitutional matters.

“And it is also important to realize in commenting about the task force’s conclusions of eliminating all federal enclaves but the District of Columbia was that this 1956 report did not look into the matters I discuss at all, and still they reached the conclusion to eliminate all these federal enclaves, except for D.C.

“And when one takes my concerns of government overreach into consideration, then even the District of Columbia must be considered fair game for being put on the chopping block for righting our nation’s past internal wrongs.

Bare Liberty

“That which was meant to be but a rare and unique exception should never have been allowed to morph into the vast governing behemoth which threatens the continued existence of the whole, the whole which was always meant to provide the standard rule of allowable government action.”

“After hearing your responses,” Peter began, “I am still personally leaning toward repeal coupled with a new State being formed. I like the simple clarity of governing power finally being divided *only* into one of two governing jurisdictions, either federal or State.

“This is the dual form of government which Americans currently understand, so there is little theoretical change for them to get used to; they only have to get used to the idea that constitutional theory and actual government practice will finally coincide and are no longer at opposing odds with one-another.

“I don’t like the idea that Congress may ever exercise any State-like powers anywhere; it simply causes far too much confusion in a very confusing topic, a topic that still confuses even those of us on our board.

“Even with ratification of your Once and For All Amendment, Mark, it would still be too difficult to know, certainly in any gray areas, when members of Congress were exercising their enumerated powers for the whole country or when they were exercising their powers ceded by a State; it is not like they or the courts will honestly tell you, if either even really knows in every case.

“I also think your Once and For All Amendment has as much disadvantage as advantage. While it is probably an easier sell to government itself and it is within the original context of the Constitution as originally ratified, its primary difficulties are that it is simply too difficult to explain to people and therefore allows too much continuing confusion, never really knowing under which power Congress happens to legislate in any particular case.”

“With all this talk about repeal of Clause 17 and eliminating the district constituted as the seat of government of the United States, doesn’t the federal government need D.C.?” asked Steve. “Is it even proper to have so many federal buildings in one State, for example?”

“Good question,” replied Mark.

“At the time of ratification of the Constitution, yes, it was considered to be too problematic for the weak federal government to be at the mercy of any one powerful State, to house the whole of the federal government in one State.

“And with rudimentary transportation and communication, spreading the government seat out over a large number of States in 1800 was equally impractical.

“If one traces back the history of Clause 17, one will find one incident vividly stuck in the minds of the drafters the Constitution. In 1783, after the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, about 70 soldiers from Lancaster, Pennsylvania marched on Congress sitting in Philadelphia to complain about their lack of military pay which was yet owed to them but not as yet forthcoming.

“By the time the mutinous soldiers reached Philadelphia, their numbers had swollen to about 400. The soldiers didn’t actually ever become riotous, but they certainly intimidated the members of Congress who at that time who were meeting under the Articles of Confederation in Philadelphia.

“To make matters worse, members of Congress seeking protection from the State of Pennsylvania were denied State assistance, perhaps because the governor feared local militia members would simply side with the rebellious soldiers and the rebellion would simply grow even further out-of-hand. Remember, the remainder of the militia members who could have been called out for service would have been former Revolutionary War soldiers who also remained unpaid for their war service.

Bare Liberty

“After a few days of quiet confrontation, members of Congress fled the city to meet instead at Princeton, New Jersey.

“This one episode of Congress needing to flee from mutinous American soldiers and being wholly unable to protect themselves left an indelible impression on these members of Congress, many of them who later met in the Constitutional Convention of 1787 or in the State ratifying conventions.

“But issues of a weak federal government and overpowering State governments are hardly concerns today. There is today no chance that members of Congress or U.S. government officers cannot be protected by federal officers, or even quell any larger, more organized uprising with our national guard, or State militias, if need be, although the latter have been long dormant. Of course, our military is on hand to repel invasions on any of our nation’s shores.

“The original concerns of the framers of the Constitution and the need of the newfound federal government struggling within the confines of overpowering State governments are wholly irrelevant today.”

“I hadn’t really ever heard that story before, but it makes some sense,” replied Steve. “The repeal of Clause 17 would hardly mean today that the federal government would suddenly become subservient to any State where any of its federal buildings were located, even if the current federal seat suddenly became its own State or again part of Maryland.”

“Regarding repeal; let me get to my other two concerns before we finish the topic,” Mark continued.

“First, as you well know, there are two methods of proposing Amendments, either by Congress or through a Convention of States. I think it will prove quite difficult to get Congress to ever voluntarily endorse repeal, but it will probably prove only slightly easier to sell them on the idea of the Once and For All Amendment.

“Perhaps one option would be to push for Congress to propose the Once and For All Amendment, but if they refuse, that we push to call a Convention of States and there push for repeal. This dual strategy may help exert appropriate pressure on Congress to propose the Once and For All Amendment, in order for them to try and keep repeal off the table, at least for the present time.

“Of course, it is unlikely Congress would actually take a voluntary lead in either case. Undoubtedly they will only act once sufficient momentum in our movement takes proper hold such that they no longer really have any option but to act as We The People learn to finally demand they act, because we finally understand how they have long deceived us, because we finally learned how to take complicated information and widely disseminate it to the public in words and concepts they could finally understand.”

“I’m not so sure I trust a Convention of States,” Janet interrupted, “especially in this day and age of so much constitutional ignorance. Perhaps Congress even wants a Convention of States, so they can lead it astray in another runaway convention and gain more power themselves.”

“You have some valid points, Janet, but probably also some unfounded concerns,” replied Mark. “On one hand, look at the original constitutional convention of 1787, which was actually called only for the sole and express purpose of merely revising the Articles of Confederation and for recommending to Congress such measures as would render the Articles adequate to meet the exigencies of the Union.

“The ramifications of that convention body exceeding their original authorization can be better understood by looking at New York, which was no longer present at the convention after July 10th because delegates Robert Yates and John Lansing, Jr. could not in good faith remain at the convention which was exceeding their commissioned authority.

“But fellow New York delegate Alexander Hamilton remained behind at the convention because although he felt authorized to ‘conclude nothing’, he felt empowered to ‘propose anything’. But with Hamilton being the sole remaining New York delegate, New York could not participate in any of remaining votes taken only by present States who were adequately represented with the minimum quorum number of delegates, which Hamilton by himself didn’t meet.

Hamilton ultimately signed the U.S. Constitution, not really as the delegate for the State of New York, but only as an individual from New York who attested to the fact that the proposed Constitution had been approved by the unanimous consent *of all the States present*, which New York was not. And of course, Rhode Island never attended the convention.

“But even with that history, of the Articles being dumped and the new Constitution being erected in its place, I still don’t necessarily fear a modern-day convention, as I do not fear any clause in the Constitution, at least beyond Clause 17 and then only that clause because it has been improperly allowed to morph beyond all recognition, because of our profound constitutional ignorance.

“The Convention of States alternative was inserted as a measure to protect the States from an independent vision by our elected representatives in Congress, which was far less of an issue when U.S. Senators were still chosen by the State legislatures themselves.

“When the State legislatures elected their own two U.S. Senators to represent that State in Congress, the State legislatures kept their U.S. Senators under a relatively short leash.

“Now however, because the 17th Amendment threw the election of U.S. Senators to a general election by all the voters of that State nominally to end political cronyism at the State capitals, those Senators are essentially freed from effective oversight, perhaps tied now only to their largest election contributors.

“Thus a Convention of States in the shadows of the 17th Amendment is an even more-important safety mechanism to help ensure members of Congress cannot as easily ignore necessary and proper changes to the Constitution desired by States, especially powers that may limit the authority exercised by those members of Congress themselves.

“I also understand Janet’s argument about widespread constitutional ignorance, but in this day and age with the internet and free and easy dissemination of ideas uncontrolled by any central source, never before have Americans been so able to individually project their voices so far, so easily, and so cheaply. In other words, at no other time in history are Americans able to speak their minds and attempt to influence whether amendments proposed by any Convention of States *should be* ratified.

“One must realize that after approving the wording of a proposed amendment or a list of proposed amendments, the Convention of States would disband.

“Thereafter the proposed amendments would go either before the separate State Legislatures or separate State ratification conventions for State-by-State ratification.

“There it would take three-fourths of all of the States of the Union to actually ratify the proposed amendment(s) before it or they became operational.

“As far as protective mechanism go, one can feel pretty safe about our amendment process and we shouldn’t summarily discount the convention process out of fear. We stand to suffer much more under the status quo. Remember, the form of government under which we now primarily operate is the most powerful on the planet, having but one authorizing statute, which statute provides Congress the express power to legislate in all cases whatsoever. Every other possible form of government would ultimately be far more restricted.

Bare Liberty

“But, of course, we don’t actually want to compare things to how they are currently practiced under Clause 17, but how they *should be* practiced *under every clause of the Constitution*. We must be careful to compare and contrast future practices only with proper authorization under the whole Constitution, and not as how legislative members and government officers may now happen to get away with their present practices.

“Therefore we must proceed with proper caution because even though there are many possible actions which could improve things *as compared with how they are currently practiced*, that is completely the wrong barometer for needed change.

“The proper barometer is the whole Constitution, properly enforced. While a runaway Convention of States wouldn’t likely harm an improper barometer of the status quo, it would easily devastate the proper barometer.”

“There are a lot of issues at stake,” offered Peter. “Even though I see wisdom of wholesale separation of State and federal power through repeal of Clause 17, given that the framers never actually implemented it in strictest principle, I guess I can see additional merit of your Once and For All Amendment if we can bypass the potentially-riskier convention process, and get Congress to propose the Once and For All Amendment directly.

“I guess I’m also a little nervous along with Janet about a Convention of States; I also think we should try and avoid one if we can correct matters with Mark’s Once and For All Amendment if we can pressure it be proposed through Congress.

“I’m confident Congress would never willingly repeal Clause 17 no matter how much I’d like them to do just that; I don’t see them willingly axing some 90 or 95% of government in one fell swoop.”

“I agree that the normal route for proposing amendments through Congress is safest and should still be able to get the job done effectively,” offered Steve, “and that it would be easiest to ever get

Congress to propose the Once and For All Amendment rather than outright repeal.”

“I guess we certainly have our work cut out for us,” replied Janet.

“Please let me finish my last thought on repeal before we conclude the discussion. I leave this for last because I believe it to be the most important concern.

“I think repeal is too severe to be actually implemented in one fell swoop. It would perhaps stop government overreach too well to ever be considered the primary route we should take, although if that is what turns out to be our only real option, then I would yet go that route.

“It took us 150 years of errant government action to get our country so far off our original course. Returning to that proper course immediately upon repeal would probably be too much like instantaneously returning an off-course ship back on-course. While it sounds great, in reality the resulting forces of gravity and inertia from that abrupt of change nationwide would perhaps rip apart that ship and cause it to sink. But again, if that ends up being the route which presents itself, then it is surely better than our present course which is necessarily leading us on a path which will lead to our sinking.

“For example, if the Federal Reserve banks immediately found themselves no longer with underlying government authority because Clause 17 had been repealed, it would force settlement of all their affairs, immediately. All their debits and credits would need to be balanced; the banks paying off any debts they perhaps owed and, more importantly, others paying off their vast debts with them, with outstanding loans called in or perhaps sold off to banks which could remain under State authority.

“The ramifications of such action would force the government to promptly meet its obligations with its federal banking creditors, undoubtedly throwing the whole financial world in utter disarray.

Bare Liberty

“Of course, that doesn’t take into any consideration the possibility of laying criminal charges on any of the possible financial defendants and going after them for intentional misrepresentations on their part in collusion with high government officials, which may help balance the scales towards their eventual cooperation.

“But I think my Once and For All Amendment is the proper interim step to first contain the improper federal powers from invalid extension beyond their strict geographic jurisdiction, so we have the opportunity to begin the proper transition back to sound government and sound money, implementing an alternative system and getting it in place before an immediate cessation of the current financial system.

“I very much like the idea of eventual repeal of Clause 17, but I think repeal is best if it comes a decade after the Once and For All Amendment finally gets us started travelling back down the right path.

“The utter simplicity of repeal is very appealing, but I believe it is actually far too powerful to implement at one time for so many other issues even beyond the Federal Reserve banks. But it is so refreshing to finally have something that will work *too well* — that will eliminate government overreach after 150 years of failure, when most of us resigned ourselves to think little could even be done to ever even slow down growing government tyranny.

“That we now have a method to eliminate government tyranny too well is a wonderful problem to have.”

Chapter Six

January 1, 2015 proved to be a historical day for the Patriot Corps, the primary organization which would be pushing forth Mark's Once and For All Amendment.

At their news conference which began at 9:00 a.m. Eastern Time, Janet Davidson began addressing the audience, relaying information about the Once and For All Amendment.

Peter Dennison next took the podium and showed the press a printed copy of *Patriot Quest* fresh off the one-off printer found at the *Politics & Prose Bookstore* in Washington, D.C., also available directly from other retailing printers nationwide at the OnDemandBooks.com website and of course available electronically at the PatriotCorps.org website and at Archive.org.

Mark responded to the few questions directed towards him during the question and answer session, but being in the limelight was Janet's forte.

Steve Frederickson was at the conference, but didn't take a turn at the podium. He was helping his brother Randy cover security protocols along with Randy's crack security team, keeping the event free from any unexpected turn of events.

Sarah Jacobs spoke briefly, but her main voice was found in several articles which appeared in the morning's edition of *The Washington Sentinel*, including the primary one which leapt off the cover page with its headline, *The Second American Revolution*.

Sarah began her article by tracing the history of the four-word phrase "in all cases whatsoever" from its origin in Britain's infamous 1766 Declaratory Act to its discussion in the American Declaration of Independence, to its ironic inclusion in the Constitution.

She then informed her readers of the proposed cure, Mark's new Once and For All Amendment.

Sarah's article covered the need for the amendment and the mechanism by which it would work. Sarah also highlighted the option of repeal of Clause 17, primarily to best conceptualize the separate natures of the different forms of the American governing power.

The early days of January were filled with meetings and presentations. Mark found himself increasingly out of his element, even though his speeches were politely well-received.

But most people's eyes seemed to glaze over after about ten or fifteen minutes, perhaps indicating they were having a hard time following his PowerPoint presentation which followed the format of *Patriot Quest*.

As January progressed, there were no signs of immediate threats of harm to Mark, Peter Dennison or Janet Davidson, let alone to Penny, the kids or grandchildren.

Mark got word through to Penny that given Bethany's unchangeable timetable of her pending delivery that it appeared safe for her to go back to her home and husband.

If Blake and his family, along with Penny, preferred to stay on at the Wyoming ranch for a while longer, Mark recommended that Blake should take Bethany home or to meet Brad somewhere, rather than expose their Wyoming location to more people, by having Brad come there to pick up Bethany and the kids.

Bethany delivered a healthy baby boy a week after she returned to the Tri-Cities, little Jeremiah.

With no great success at his lectures, Mark began pulling away from them, being drawn backward in time to a different approach he had used to reach out to the American public. He recalled his time living in the Wenatchee Valley, smack dab in the middle of Washington State, halfway between Seattle and Spokane, from 2005 until 2011.

Bare Liberty

It was during his stay in Chelan County that he had talked Penny into sewing him a red, white, and blue colonial patriot outfit, so he could walk around in the colors of the flag he was prohibited from flying on their small commercial parcel they owned in the Bavarian-themed city of Leavenworth, Washington.

Leavenworth was the city which ultimately enacted five emergency ordinances keeping Mark from displaying the large American flag he wanted to fly from an 80-foot flagpole he sought to erect, out of fear that the American flag would ‘overwhelm’ and ‘conflict’ with their old world Bavarian design theme.

Mark ultimately lost his five-year legal battle to display his flag, although not without the partial victory of the city repealing their first flag ordinance and enacting another in its place without several of the harshest components found in the first version.

Continuing his early goals of reinvigorating the Constitution, Mark later walked door-to-door to several thousand homes in Wenatchee, handing out pocket-sized copies of the Constitution and his *2010 Petition for a Redress of Grievances*, the latter of which later formed the basis for his *Patriot Corps Pledge*.

Recollecting his walks through Wenatchee in his colonial patriot outfit, Mark recalled people stopping their cars along the side of the road to ask him what he was doing. He remembered two young men running out of a business to catch up to him after he had walked past their building, just so they could ask what was going on.

Never did Mark experience any bad behavior aimed his direction, although a fair number of people who supported the status quo in government were instantly turned off by Mark’s obvious tea party appearance.

But Mark knew that those who tuned him out immediately were hardly of open mind to listen to his talking points, so he was just as thankful not to waste any of his precious time on them as they wished to avoid wasting theirs on him.

The local media also gave Mark an extensive amount of free publicity, not only on his flag-lawsuit case, but also on his 2010 Petition and his colonial patriot escapades.

Since his colonial patriot outfit had opened doors before, arousing people's innate curiosity, Mark was confident it would do so again. Since his hip bothered him now, riding a Segway would help ease his hip pains while providing a stark technological contrast with his historical clothing.

With some early donations, Mark ordered 5,000 copies of *Patriot Quest* printed in soft cover, inexpensive enough to be able to hand out free of charge to interested parties who promised to read it.

He also found a used Segway in good shape.

While any marketing guru worth his salt would argue that recipients of free gifts wouldn't value them, Mark's take on handing out the small book was that the information contained therein was priceless, but that no one could ever recognize its worth without reading it.

If Mark had been a good salesman, maybe he could hope to sell a copy to a few people for five or at most ten dollars each, but he wasn't even a fair salesman.

In the back of Mark's mind, he thought it within the realm of possibility that readers would perhaps occasionally send in donations; after all, two billion dollars were willingly and voluntarily donated every four years of late just to elect a President who had no ability to steer government away from its strict constitutional moorings other than the devious route which would finally be eliminated by following the outline laid out in *Patriot Quest*.

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At the end of January, Mark broke off secret communications with Penny to ask her to meet up with him, especially since Bethany had already left the fold and knew where they were, nominally putting Bethany at greater risk if there was anyone seeking to get to Mark through his family.

“Mark is that you, Dear?” Penny asked after hearing her husband’s voice for the first time in a month.

“Yes, Darling, it’s me,” answered Mark.

“It is so good to hear your voice,” Penny offered.

“And your’s,” replied Mark.

“Before I head back to the East Coast to be with you, I have to first head up to the Tri-Cities and see our new grandson and make sure Bethany is doing well,” Penny stated.

“Sure, I understand,” replied Mark.

Mark and Penny caught up with one another about the past month’s activities and their immediate future plans. Since Mark was still back in Washington, D.C., he wanted to spend a little more time there before they began the next leg of their adventure, although he didn’t really have any concrete plans on where that would be.

Penny took a bus to the Tri-Cities and stayed with Bethany and Brad and helped keep the household functioning as the new mother necessarily had to pay a little extra attention to Jeremiah.

“Brad has become quite bitter about missing almost all of the pregnancy, such as going with Bethany to see the first sonogram and find out the sex of the child, feeling as if he had to pay for your paranoia, for what appears now to be for no reason,” Penny informed Mark on their first phone conversation after she arrived at Bethany’s.

“And I’d rather him be mad at me for no apparent reason than if the reason had actually turned out to be true,” answered Mark.

Penny stayed with Bethany for a week, and then flew back to the nation's capital before she and Mark decided what to do next.

On Friday morning, February 6th, Mark left the hotel after breakfast, riding his Segway and dressed in his red, white and blue colonial patriot outfit topped by his rabbit fur-felt tricorn hat.

Over his shoulder was his knapsack full of *Patriot Quest* books which he would be handing out as warranted, together with the fliers on his books which he'd be handing out to people who didn't seem as interested, people who could download the books at the www.PatriotCorps.org website if they later found sufficient interest.

Mark met many interesting people on his travels. Large percentages of them expressed deep concern for the future of our country while a fair number admitted to a growing aversion to politics-as-usual.

Mark witnessed what many political analysts liked to call public 'apathy', but Mark found in most cases it was actually only 'disgust' with a corrupted system of which they wanted no part, along with a general feeling of helplessness about not being actually able to do anything to correct matters, let alone knowing what those steps would be.

Mark informed anyone who would listen that feelings of helplessness were simply signs of failing to understand how government had gotten so far off course, and that time spent learning the mechanisms of government overreach would educate people sufficiently for them to figure out they were far from helpless and that they could actually do much to help correct errant government ways.

For most people, working to restore limited government was a great idea, but someone else's responsibility; after all, what could the common man or woman really do?

Mark always answered, "First get informed and then get involved. Patriot Corps can help you do both."

Bare Liberty

The following Monday Mark visited one of the area's college campuses passing out his books and talking with students.

The higher education campuses were a reprieve from the bustling daily life of adults who were fully-engaged with the routine of their lives, working their jobs attempting to make ends meet, getting the kids off to school and shuttling the children about for after-school activities.

While Mark received favorable responses for his efforts and even praises for his work, he yet found it difficult to gauge if he was making much headway, as the routine of life kept most adults busy enough that they found little time for increasing their knowledge of how government overreach ever gathered an improper and invalid foothold in the first place.

The college campuses were different. People of all ages were found there, but most of them were young and idealistic, eager to learn Mark's largely-unknown take on American history and politics.

Mark had a few run-ins with campus security even on that first day. His odd attire certainly made him a target for security personnel who understandably insisted that students were paying good money to get a proper education from established professors who taught in formal classroom settings subjects for which the students would receive proper accreditation, and he was generally perceived as an unwelcome distraction to that end.

To bypass the security guards, Mark began talking with students leaving the campus to see if there were any sympathetic professors who may be open to him giving a guest lecture, during or after class.

After hearing one name come up on numerous occasions, Mark made an appointment to meet the professor for Wednesday, February 11th, at 3:30 pm.

Professor John Doolittle, in his mid-50's, was moderately balding, bespectacled, and wore a button-up shirt with sweater vest. He was affable and good natured.

On the wall of the professor's office were copies of America's founding documents; the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution — rearranged onto one sheet, and the Bill of Rights.

"I like your historical posters," Mark commented, as he entered into Professor Doolittle's office at the appointed hour.

"Thank you," answered the Professor. "It would be difficult to come up with anything else which has had more lasting impact in this country than those three writings, unless, of course, one counted the Bible."

"Agreed," answered Mark.

"I've heard about you on campus from some of my students, and also once in a seminar I attended," the Professor continued. "I hear that your latest work recommends a corrective measure to restore limited government under strict construction of the whole Constitution. Naturally, I am intrigued."

The two talked at length, with Mark giving a copy of *Patriot Quest* to the professor and accepting an invitation to give a class lecture Friday morning.

"Good morning, Professor," Mark offered Friday morning, seeing the professor in his classroom a few minutes before the two-hour class was to begin.

"Good morning to you, Mr. Evanston," replied the professor. "After reading your book, I'm thrilled to have you speak to the class. I have a few questions already, but they can wait until the Q and A session after your lecture. Do you have your laptop to hook up to my projector?"

"Yes, sure," Mark answered, giving Professor Doolittle his laptop.

The professor introduced Mark to the classroom, which was in a moderate-sized lecture hall, filled with about 50 students taking the upper-division political science class.

Bare Liberty

Mark began his presentation, which followed the information given in *Patriot Quest*. The students seemed to follow the presentation quite well as the whole; evidently their studies improved their attention spans well beyond that of the general public.

Mark finished the presentation with time left for questions and answers.

The professor went first, commenting and asking “I’ve heard some of your information before, in one of former U.S. Treasurer Janet Davidson’s lectures. But she never offered any direct cure you now offer. Your information on your Once and For All Amendment seems incredibly straightforward and almost magically simple. Do you really believe this simple clarification can be such a powerful weapon in our 150 year fight to restore proper direction for our U.S. government?”

Mark gave his answer why the amendment was incredibly powerful, that it followed historical examples for clarifying constitutional power. “Simplicity is elegant,” Mark offered, “because it contains nothing more than it takes to get the job at hand done, properly, within full consistency of the whole Constitution — its words and also its spirit. It simply closes down a loophole which had been exploited for all it was worth, and sets us firmly back on the original course for limited federal action.”

The questions from students continued unabated until the class had to be dismissed, so the next lecture could soon begin in the same lecture hall.

The professor and several students talked at greater length with Mark outside the classroom, getting Mark’s email address and promising they would keep in touch.

After the classroom experience, Mark believed he had found a better approach to disseminating his information to people who would be better able to understand and act upon the information in a favorable manner.

Students tended toward greater idealism and seemed willing to invest a little effort to bring about constructive change in full agreement with America's founding principles, far more than the general public Mark had before concentrated upon whom seemed too busy and preoccupied to be of much real help.

Mark went back to the hotel room, telling Penny he wanted to visit more universities and college campuses on their future travels. "Maybe we could take an RV and slowly make our way back to Vancouver; what do you think?" he asked.

"If you visit only college campuses, you'll probably forego publicity in the news or in the newspapers, as compared with being out in front of the general public," Penny commented. "I have to admit that you've had pretty good luck getting free publicity with your outlandish outfit in times past."

"I hadn't thought of that, but you're probably right," Mark replied. "I guess I should also keep going door-to-door to keep an accurate pulse on the public, because that is where they live," Mark commented.

"But what about the idea of a slow RV trip across America?" asked Mark.

"I like the idea; there is so little we've seen of the country," replied Penny.

"Great. I'll get with Peter and get things lined up," answered Mark.

On Saturday, February 14th, Mark went out for a short day before taking his Valentine out for dinner.

After handing out dozens of books in one of the city's outer neighborhoods that morning, Mark rounded a corner and became oddly disoriented. He didn't seem to know where he was, which was unusual, as Mark typically had a good sense of direction.

Bare Liberty

Of even more pressing concern, however, Mark didn't any longer recall how to balance himself on the Segway.

Mark leaned backward slightly as a natural reaction because he no longer wished to be travelling quite so fast in the forward direction, but then he leaned too far backward and the wheels of the Segway came to an abrupt stop while its handle bars kept their forward momentum going for a moment longer. Mark toppled head-first over the Segway and landed on the edge of the grass.

Mark lay there for a moment, trying to regain his senses as a passing car stopped. The driver, a man, got out while his wife remained in the car.

"I'm a nurse," the Good Samaritan offered as he ran up to Mark. "Are you ok?"

"I think so," Mark responded.

"Did you bump your head in the fall, or hurt your neck?" the nurse asked.

"I don't think so," said Mark, who hardly sounded convincing, instead sounding rather dazed and confused.

The nurse, who saw the fall, was more concerned that Mark had some type of episode which caused him to crash than actually being worried that Mark got hurt in the fall, for Mark had clearly first lost his balance before he went tumbling and the fall didn't really appear that harsh.

"What's your name?" asked the nurse.

"Mark Evanston," replied Mark.

"What year is it?" the nurse quizzed.

"It is...2015," Mark answered, a little more slowly.

"What day is it?"

"Saturday," Mark answered, almost guessing.

“What about the date?”

“I’m not sure,” Mark had to admit.

“Do you know where you are?”

“I guess I can’t place myself; I don’t think I’m in Vancouver,” Mark commented, since he didn’t recognize a familiar skyline, including Mount Hood, the mountain on which he had spent many days of his youth while enjoying his favorite pastime, downhill skiing.

“I’m first going to ask you to remember the name ‘Bob’, can you remember that for me?”

“Sure.”

“Next I’m going to ask you to remember the number ‘three’, ok?”

“Ok.”

“Please remember an animal for me, a ‘cat’?”

“Ok.”

After the nurse performed a few objective tests checking for injury, he returned to his earlier questions and asked, “Now, what was the name of a person I asked you to remember?”

“I, I...I don’t remember,” commented Mark. “Bill, I think.”

“How about the number, do you remember what number I asked you to remember?”

“No, I don’t.”

“How about the animal, do you know what animal I asked you to remember?”

“No.”

“Do you remember the name of America’s first President?”

“George Washington.”

“Current President?”

"I'd like to forget," Mark said dryly, not only trying to evade answering any more questions which he couldn't answer, but also knowing full well that he hadn't been any too thrilled with any of the occupants of that office for the past 150 years.

"Let me further examine your head, to make sure I don't see any overt signs of trauma," commented the nurse, as he began examining Mark's scalp for cuts or bruises.

"Many people have told me before that I have a thick skull, so I don't think there would be any harm to me even if you do find a head injury," Mark stated, as his senses were coming back to him. "Besides, no brains, no headaches, so every 'problem' must to have a bright side, right?"

"Do you have any family history of strokes, dementia, or mental illness?" asked the nurse, ignoring Mark's failed attempt at humor.

"All three, to some extent," answered Mark, now regaining much of his normal cognizance. "My dad and mom both had a number of Transient Ischemic Attacks; my dad passed away with Alzheimer's, and my dad's mom had a mental breakdown after her first child, a boy, died a few hours after he had been born. His death affected her to various degrees for the rest of her life, which is perhaps understandable."

"I'm not seeing much evidence of any acute, physical injury, but your short-term memory isn't any good and your family history is hardly reassuring; we need to get you to a doctor right away for a checkup," stated the nurse.

"Are you saying my head needs to be examined by specialists?" asked Mark. "For if you are, you're hardly the first to ever suggest that."

"You're quite adept at using self-deprecating humor to diffuse the seriousness of the situation at hand, but this is hardly a laughing matter," the nurse stated, annoyed that Mark wasn't taking his health seriously.

“But isn’t laughter supposed to be the best medicine?” asked Mark dryly.

“Keep laughing, funny guy. Actually, who in their right mind in the 21st century wears an 18th-century colonial patriot outfit and rides a Segway? Maybe we should be taking you to the Funny Farm, where you can exchange your colorful outfit for a form-fitting outfit of one color, which ties in the back,” responded the nurse, growing sufficiently perturbed with his patient’s inappropriate comments to ignore them any longer.

“Again, you’re hardly the first to suggest that very thing,” said Mark, who seemed particularly suited to induce aggravation, even in a Good Samaritan who was there only to help him.

“It is just that my colonial patriot outfit gives anyone who sees it some idea of my possible point of view, even if they don’t know what exactly I’m doing. But when you throw in a Segway into the mix, even more people become curious enough to stop me and ask. My outfit and mode of transportation give me a small window of opportunity to steer some of them to my work to help bring about a restoration of our American Republic, once and for all.

“My outfit and mode of transportation are a foot in the door to try and convince people to expend a few hours of their time investigating how the United States were diverted from their rightful place in the history books and how to restore them back upon solid footing.”

“I guess that doesn’t sound so crazy after-all,” commented the nurse. “But what a get-up, who in their right mind would ever be caught dead in such odd attire?”

“Those who are fully committed to their cause won’t necessarily mind a few wise-cracks about being a crack-pot if they reasonably believe there is an increased chance at reaching a few more folks,” answered Mark.

“Just think how cold of a reception door-to-door salesmen get in the ‘normal’ world; if my odd attire gives me a few extra seconds to pitch my message, I think it is worth it.”

“Maybe you should instead try a different approach, something instead of making cold calls,” commented the nurse.

“If I had an out-going, charming personality and magnetic charisma, I’d agree,” Mark replied. “But I don’t. Neither am I a good public speaker, nor a good salesman who can easily sell himself or his ideas. So instead maybe I resort to a few gimmicks to make up for a few of my many faults.

“Some patriots assert that my gimmicks cheapen or degrade my message, but I argue that if I can reach a different audience than those who would be drawn by other means, then it isn’t all that crazy. I reach out to the common man by this manner, on a level which seems to set them at relative ease. Most of them find my wholehearted commitment to my cause sincere and perhaps even refreshing, rather than downright kooky.

“I have friends who are respected, well-polished professionals on the lecture circuit who reach the studied experts, the Ivy Leaguer’s, the doctors, the attorneys, the college professors, the Wall Street financiers, and high-profile government officials.

“But that’s not me, I don’t really speak their language nor do I fit in with that crowd. I don’t try and be something I’m not. I prefer staying down-to-earth even as I perhaps veer out into left-field as far as my antics are concerned.

“So, if I left a copy of *Patriot Quest* with you in appreciation of your care and concern for me, would you be willing to invest a few hours in reading it?”

“So that’s your sales pitch?” asked the nurse.

“In this case, yes,” replied Mark.

“I’ll read at least the first chapter or two,” answered the nurse.

“Well then, here is a copy and your work with me is done,” said Mark. “Thank you so much for using your time and skills to come to my aid.”

“Thanks for the book,” replied the nurse. “Will you promise me in return to make an appointment to go see your doctor? Actually, I’d recommend a visit to the emergency room now, to best check you out while your body has been freshly assaulted, in a manner of speaking.”

“Given the circumstances, I probably shouldn’t refuse your wise council,” said Mark. “Thank you again so much for your help and concern.”

Chapter Seven

After the nurse left the scene of the accident, Mark picked up the Segway's handle bars and looked to see if everything was working properly. He wasn't even certain if his sense of balance was yet back to normal, so he took extra care getting underway.

He rode the scooter without further incident the several miles back to the hotel, thankful that he remembered its location.

Mark relayed his morning's ordeal to Penny, who immediately became concerned, forgetting about their plans for an early dinner to celebrate Valentine's Day.

"Are you worried that my downward trend is starting?" Mark asked, setting himself up for a fall if Penny was in a mood to tell him that his downhill plummet had started long before.

Penny didn't accept the bait, instead saying, "We need to get you in to see a doctor right away and have them start checking you out."

"What about waiting until Monday?" asked Mark. "I don't know if I really need to go to the emergency room, though my Good Samaritan also recommended it."

"If we wait until next week to try and schedule an appointment with a doctor, who knows when you'll actually get an appointment, let alone have any needed tests ordered and evaluated," Penny stated. "Going to the emergency room now will get things sped up considerably, and could perhaps give us better information than if we let your body recuperate from today's episode."

"You have valid points, I guess; OK, I'll go," replied Mark.

Penny looked up the nearest hospital's information while Mark changed into normal street clothes.

"Ok, I'm ready to go," Mark said.

"Should we call for a cab, or are you up for public transportation?" Penny asked.

“Let’s just get a taxi today,” Mark answered, the taxi later dropping them off at one of the smaller hospitals nearest them.

Mark filled out the entry paperwork and answered the receptionist’s questions, providing his alternative health coverage, Samaritan Ministries, which is a faith-based health sharing ministry offering a much less expensive alternative to traditional health insurance without many of the latter’s negative aspects.

In about an hour and a half, Mark was finally taken back and placed into one of the exam cubicles, with an E.R. nurse later coming in to talk with them.

Mark relayed the events of the afternoon and his family history.

The E.R. doctor soon came in and read through the chart. He went through a neurological workup and performed a brief memory test. Blood was drawn to run a full panel of diagnostics. The doctor ordered a heart ECG and MRI scan of his brain.

After three hours of being poked, prodded, and scanned, the doctor came back in to see Mark and Penny.

“I don’t see any evidence of thrombosis, of blood clots getting lodged anywhere in the body and wreaking havoc,” commented the doctor. “Your brain scan and heart tests look clear. Your memory workup is fine now, although it sounds as if you didn’t do so well on your earlier memory test.

“I would guess you had what we call a Transient Ischemic Attack, caused by a decreased blood flow to your brain which impaired its function sufficiently to cause you to fall. That you were riding a Segway which is difficult enough to balance on its own makes it tricky to accurately gauge how bad off you were at that moment. Perhaps if you had been walking, you maybe wouldn’t have skipped a beat. And then you could have also bumped your head in the fall, although I don’t really find any evidence of that.

“Our testing at least provides a good baseline which can be compared in later years to your health at that time, to monitor any progressive worsening of any condition you may have or develop. I would suggest you to keep in regular contact with your Primary Care Physician, given your family history and today’s events.

“We did find something odd which doesn’t make sense to me; you have incisions suggestive that you had a shunt to drain an excess buildup of fluid on your brain, but we didn’t find any evidence that a shunt was actually installed,” commented the doctor.

“Oh that,” Mark commented, as he tried to recall the cover story he was told if this moment ever came to pass.

“I think the doctor found evidence that the fluid which had been building up in my brain was starting to dissipate just as he was getting ready to install the shunt,” stated Mark, who offered as little information as possible.

“OK, I guess,” commented the doctor. “Although I wouldn’t have expected him to make incisions both on your scalp and abdomen, and then decide the shunt wasn’t needed, but whatever.

“The nurse will be wrapping up your discharge papers and will be with you in a few moments. Do you have any questions of me?”

“Are there certain things I should do or avoid?” asked Mark.

“You mean like riding a Segway?” answered the doctor rhetorically. “Basically, realize that you are getting older and slowing down, but that doesn’t mean we want you to stop being active. Moderation is important. I’m giving you a list of common do’s and don’ts, but it is important to maintain a watchful eye for unexpected sensations and bodily movements.”

“Thanks, Doc,” Mark offered as the doctor turned and left the room.

Mark and Penny were able to leave in another 20 minutes, and they hailed a taxi to take them back home to their hotel.

"I guess I've been officially inducted into the Hall of Fame for the Aged and Infirm," Mark quipped as they entered their room, with Penny too drained emotionally to respond to Mark's admission, letting him know he had entered long before.

"I'm glad we were able to come home, even if that home is currently a hotel. I certainly didn't want to see you spend the whole night in the hospital," Penny offered. "I'm thankful that God answered my prayers and kept you safe."

"Maybe you should park the Segway for good and walk," Penny commented. "Walking is safer and gives you better exercise, keeping your blood flowing."

"But walking will bother my hip more, even if I walk only a little bit," answered Mark.

"I know you've been putting up with that darn hip for a long time now, and that it has progressively worsened," Penny replied. "Maybe we should finally look into getting your right hip replaced also."

"I can get a new bionic hip and be like Major Steve Austin, the man barely alive..." Mark offered, referring to the 1970's television cult classic with Lee Majors starring as *The Six Million Dollar Man*[™] which he enjoyed as a teenager.

"I don't know about bionic parts, but I can see you finally now getting your new hip," Penny responded.

"So where do we recuperate; where do we have the surgery?" Mark asked.

"Good question," replied Penny. "I can't see recuperating in a cramped and cluttered motorhome as you said you wanted to take on tour. You with a walker or on crutches in an R.V. would be like living with a three-legged bull in a china closet."

"We could stay in a motel, one with a kitchenette," Mark offered.

"We could stay with Bethany and Brad," Penny replied.

“You said they seem to be going through a rocky ‘get-reacquainted’ period since Bethany and the kids moved back to the Tri-Cities from Wyoming. Then there is the new baby, which is probably a difficult adjustment for them under any condition. I know it would be a mistake for me to mend there with Brad upset with me,” Mark replied.

“Good point, and Blake and Daphne are still in Wyoming, but they are supposed to be leaving in a few weeks once they finally decide where they’re going next,” Penny stated. “Well, maybe I could see if Sheila and Ron would let us stay in their apartment again, like they did in 2009 when you had your left hip replaced,” Penny commented, referring to her sister and brother-in-law, Sheila and Ron Hampton.

“We could always check with my family; my mom for example,” Mark stated.

“Your mom has enough on her plate now with her own health issues. Besides, I would be more comfortable staying with my family, than yours,” Penny replied. “You seem oblivious to various subtleties which anyone we stay with may inadvertently let escape as we overstay our welcome, and I’d rather personally deal with those subtleties from my family, not yours.”

“Well, if you’re up for it and if you think they’d be up for it, why don’t you check with Sheila and Ron. If we’re going to do this, I’d rather get it done quickly. We can fly back to Portland and get in to see an orthopedic surgeon. I don’t figure I’ll have any problems getting a surgeon to agree to perform my surgery; I’m sure it’ll be just a matter of scheduling the procedure.”

“Fair enough, can we get some sleep tonight?” asked Penny, too tired to worry again about the possibility of another airplane flight, so soon after the one she had just taken to get to the East Coast. “I’m exhausted.”

Penny's sister Sheila and her husband Ron said it would be no problem for Penny and Mark stay with them in their apartment for a few months until Mark had his surgery and healed up.

Mark and Penny finalized their plans and flew to Portland, Oregon, on Friday, February 20th, despite Penny's misgivings about flying again so soon. Ron picked them up at the airport and took them to their new 'home' in Battle Ground, Washington.

Mark had an appointment with a local orthopedist the following Monday. The weekend was spent centered around food, catching up on all the family activities of the brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews, in-laws and out-laws.

Mark was quickly approved for a total hip replacement surgery once a few standard range-of-motion tests were performed, his hip x-rays and CT-scans evaluated and his gait analyzed.

Surgery was scheduled for Wednesday, March 18, 2015. He was told to be at the hospital at 5:30 a.m., for an operating time currently scheduled for 8:30 a.m., which would last about two hours.

Mark's surgeon gave a rather gruesome overview of the procedure, letting Mark be generally aware of the extent of the surgery, to realize the proper need for a full recovery.

Mark would be given a spinal tap and have an anesthetic within his IV fluid to put him to sleep, bypassing general anesthesia unless problems developed during surgery which necessitated it.

Bypassing general anesthesia meant Mark should recover from surgery more quickly and shorten his hospital stay.

The surgeon would then flex Mark's right hip and drive his knee across the midline while internally rotating the hip, ultimately forcing a dislocation of Mark's hip socket. The femoral head would be fleshed out and sawn off at the base of the femoral neck.

Bare Liberty

The socket of Mark's hip bone would be ground out, allowing the fitting of a new a metallic cup glued into the hip bone, secured with screws if need be. A plastic liner would then be fitted into the socket, to cushion the new titanium ball whose corresponding shaft would be hammered down into the now-exposed marrow of Mark's right femoral bone.

The ligaments and muscles along with their corresponding tendons would be examined to make sure they were all properly attached and where they should be and everything would be sewn back up. The bone cement securing the socket and shaft would be set within 20 minutes, meaning that the new joint would be able to withstand Mark's full body weight as soon as he awakened from surgery.

The weeks preceding surgery came and went quickly and Mark soon found himself being wheeled into surgery on a gurney. When he woke up in recovery, he was told the surgery went according to plan.

The physical therapist had Mark up out of his bed later that afternoon and walking with the aid of a walker, about 10 steps out into the hall and back. Mark got a little light-headed, but otherwise was feeling OK after the walk.

Penny spent the night in the hospital room on the sofa which doubled as a bed, which therefore meant that it wasn't well-fitted for either purpose. The cushion was extremely firm, and there was a cold draft coming down over her from the overhead vent. She had a restless night, getting very little sleep between her discomfort and interruptions from the nursing staff as they cared for their recuperating patient.

Morning therapy went well, and Mark took three laps around the nursing station with the walker. To Mark's relief, the catheter soon came out, only now he had to frequently get up to use the bathroom. Mark was able to go home later that day, the day after surgery, after the 2:00 p.m. therapy session.

Mark took his recuperation period fairly easy, the last thing he cared to do was to flare things up. He necessarily avoided flexing his hip over 90 degrees, internally rotating his foot and hip, or crossing his leg over the midline, all events which the doctor first performed to dislocate the hip to access the deep-seated joint.

Mark kept in regular communication with Peter, Janet, and Steve. Much of their time was being spent with other private organizations and tax-exempt foundations to bring them up to speed on the Patriot Corps' work directed towards a new constitutional amendment.

A multi-term retired United States Senator came out of retirement and into the Patriot Corps fold, primary to work with the House of Representatives and Senate regarding the formal proposal of a new constitutional amendment.

Many past and present State legislative members were brought on board to begin educating their fellow members about the need for the Once and For All Amendment. Unfortunately, there was a great deal of constitutional ignorance to deal with first, even with those dedicated souls who had long worked intimately in government.

By late April, Mark was six weeks post-surgery. He hadn't been back on his Segway, and had no immediate plans to do so. He wanted to get back to a few college campuses, as school would soon be out for summer and he wanted to yet reach a few more students.

Mark's characteristic limp was gone and he was walking pretty much normally for the first time in 15 years.

Blake, Daphne and the Banning boys arrived back in Vancouver on April 29th, deciding to settle down in the outskirts, at least for the immediate future.

Brad and Bethany were going through a difficult marital readjustment period with a new baby throwing a little added stress into the mix; the D-word was even being mentioned in the heat of the moment.

Bare Liberty

After discussions with Peter and Janet, Mark had further discussions with Penny regarding his future activities. It was important for Mark to get more into the thick of things, to be another strong voice for his constitutional amendment.

With his surgical healing progressing well, Mark was being called back into active service, to cast his voice for limited government and individual freedom. He began giving a small number of local presentations, often to no more than a dozen people in attendance.

Regarding one's voice, Mark often used the example of Toto in *The Wizard of Oz™*; even though Toto was just a small dog with a little brain, he nevertheless had a faithful nose and capable bark. After Toto had followed his nose to discover the man behind the curtain, all he needed to do thereafter was to bark incessantly to draw appropriate attention to that man behind the curtain, the man whose true power was really only that of deception.

Mark said his primary role now was simply to B.A.R.K. like a dog far and wide, to Build Awareness of Republican Knowledge, so he could R.O.A.R. like a lion, so he could Restore Our American Republic, following the information found in *Patriot Quest*.

Mark encouraged his audiences to find their voice, to learn to B.A.R.K. independently so together we could R.O.A.R. It was that simple, he said, for Americans to help their country find her way. We must simply expose evil deception to the purifying light of day.

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When audience members heard a few statistics about constitutional amendments, they became easily discouraged. Mark pointed out that the U.S. Senate website acknowledges an estimated 11,623 formal amendment proposals have been made since 1789, with only 27 of them ever being ratified.

With about two ratifications for every 1,000 formal attempts, the odds clearly weren't in favor of ratification, and that is not even considering all the ideas which never even made it to formal proposal status.

Mark pointed out that the 11th Amendment took only two years to be proposed and ratified, after the Supreme Court ruled in 1793 in a manner which the several States did not appreciate.

The States set the record straight as how certain words of the Constitution would thereafter be construed, rather than as how the court had chosen to interpret them, even though their ruling was rational given the words of the Constitution.

The 27th Amendment, however, was finally ratified in 1992, even though it was actually proposed along with the Bill of Rights in 1789, as the second of 12 proposed amendments.

Thus, even though one amendment only took only a few years to ratify and one took 203 years, it was important to just keep pushing forward with the appropriate strategy until the needed task was accomplished.

Mark told his listeners that the difficulty of the task ahead could not be a major determinant in deciding what path to take. The right path was the proper path no matter how difficult it may turn out to be; it would simply take sufficient resolve to ever achieve the desired outcome.

Mark pointed out that American patriots must neither apologize for, nor be discouraged by the extreme difficulty of ratifying constitutional amendments, for that difficulty is what has actually protected America from the improper government growth for 225 years.

Bare Liberty

Increased governmental powers which aren't based on ratified constitutional amendments are therefore but a legal mirage, Mark explained. Mark pointed out that no federal action has ever actually *changed* the Constitution, for only the States may change the Constitution, by ratifying Amendments, via Article V.

No action by the President, no action by the Congress, and not even any action by the Supreme Court, individually or even all three combined, has therefore ever actually *changed* the Constitution, not one iota.

It is up to patriotic Americans to properly reclaim our limited government which never left us; we simply need to comprehend how government was successfully hijacked by designing scoundrels who were able to bluff their way to success based upon our ignorance of traditional American principles of limited government.

Chapter Eight

Charles Cunningham, VII had grown restless in his self-imposed exile in the Cayman Islands, where he fled after Sarah Jacobs' article on the Cunningham family tie to the scandalous outbreak of the Civil War broke in *The Washington Sentinel* on May 1, 2014.

Sarah's article was based on Mark Evanston's discovery of his fourth great-grandfather Chester Adamson's long-lost compilation of documents which disclosed the evil plot to divide the nation to loosen government away from strict construction of the Constitution.

Using slavery as their only admitted means, proponents for a third national bank including Charles Cunningham, III drove the nation to war to help create the political atmosphere to be able to establish the first legal tender paper currencies and new national banking associations.

The fiendish work of Charles Cunningham, III had surprised even his great, great-grandson who, like the rest of the nation, had never heard these stories. But Charles VII soon came to realize that he must maintain his lofty position in the high-finance community because his fellow colleagues would surely need his expertise as six generations of banking colleagues had needed the Cunningham help to maintain their control over the country before him.

For the past year since his banishment, Charles VII had been cautiously contacting his most trusted allies one-on-one, carefully building back his reputation and working diligently to re-exert an ample measure of influence.

After reading Sarah Jacobs' January 1, 2015 article on Mark Evanston's proposed Once and For All Amendment, Charles VII became infuriated that Mark Evanston was again proving to be a royal thorn in his side.

Charles immediately understood how the amendment would curtail the effective reach of his beloved Federal Reserve System

which had been transferring ever-greater portions of government assets into private hands such as his own for now over a century and how repeal of Clause 17 would eliminate the original authorization of the bank and would therefore terminate its continued existence.

The Cunningham family fortune was started when Charles I had been a junior associate with the group which helped establish the first bank of the United States in 1791. That Charles Cunningham, no relation to the British officer who fought the United States for Great Britain during the Revolutionary War, was the type of man warned of by President George Washington in his farewell address, to be on guard “against the impostures of pretended patriotism.”

When the first bank’s original 20-year charter expired in 1811 without an extension by Congress, Charles II helped foment the War of 1812 which brought about demand for a new 20-year charter for the second bank, which began in 1816.

But President Andrew Jackson’s infamous battles against extending the second bank’s 20-year charter proved too great for the banking proponents and its charter also expired without renewal.

While war twice provided the necessary stimulus for establishing national banks, prolonged periods of peace repeatedly proved fatal for both of them.

Charles III had worked diligently to establish a third bank, but suffered a frightening setback in 1840 when the brave Democratic Congress established the first Independent Treasury system. Democratic President Martin Van Buren ceremoniously signed the proposed legislation into law on July 4th as our Second Declaration of Independence, this time freedom for Americans from fractional reserve banks and their debasing paper currencies.

But the Whigs came to power in Congress and the White House a year later and repealed the Independent Treasury act which hadn’t yet been fully implemented.

The Whig Congress soon approved legislation for a third bank of the United States and sent the proposed legislation to the President to sign it into law. But Whig President John Tyler refused his assent to his political party's primary political agenda, because to sign the proposed banking bill "would be to commit a crime which I would not willfully commit to gain any earthly reward."

All the President's cabinet, except Secretary of State Daniel Webster, resigned in protest, attempting to show a vote of no-confidence in the President. Rioting soon took place in the streets of Washington, D.C.; the D.C. police were soon formed in response to the incident.

But the courageous young Democratic political party again rose to power and banking proponents suffered crushing political losses as Congress chartered a new Independent Treasury on August 6, 1846, which became fully-established.

The Treasury of the United States became the literal treasury for the government. The mint and branch mints, along with the custom houses, served as sub-treasuries.

The only money thereafter used by the entire U.S. Government was gold and silver coin, although written drafts were used to offset credits and debits owed from one place to another to minimize the physical transfer of coin across the expanse of the country to the extent possible. These drafts allowed by Section 1 of the Act were specifically prohibited from being thrown into circulation as either a form of money or medium of exchange in Section 21.

U.S. Treasury notes would also always be accepted by the government for any debt due it, while any individual creditor who the government owed money could voluntarily choose to accept the interest-bearing government security in place of the gold or silver coin which the creditor was legally due.

One of the most spectacular features about the 1846 Independent Treasury Act was that it made the deposit of any government money

into any bank by any government officer felony embezzlement under any circumstance. The act also prohibited all government officers from accepting any paper money emitted by any State bank for any obligation due government. And, of course, since 1836, no national bank continued to exist.

Even international war did not phase this stable new system, the Mexican War was fought with none of the economic gyrations suffered in the aftermath of the War of 1812, even though military spending was as large in the later war, looking at dollar figures with constant value.

Jefferson's agrarian ideal of limited government using hard currencies had finally won the long back-and-forth political war against Hamilton's strong central government extending political favor to preferential supporters, especially the national bankers with their paper currencies, at least as long as limited government under strict construction of the Constitution remained intact.

The tide would not turn for the national banks until rabid abolitionist Peyton Phillips came up with a deceitful plan to use slavery as the banking proponents' admitted means to foment a war to divide and conquer the nation from within, thereby creating unprecedented debts to finally secure perpetual demand for national banks.

But Phillips' plan lacked a sufficient fuse to initiate armed violence between North and South, neither side was willing to fire that fateful first shot, to initiate overt war through violent aggression against their former Union members.

Enter Gordon Radcliff, the dutiful and rather naïve student of Charles Cunningham, III, who developed a devilish plan to use America's seacoast system of defense as a means for the South to inadvertently begin armed aggression, even as the South believed they were defending their own interests.

Bare Liberty

In 1829, during an expansion of America's fortification system, Congress appropriated money to begin work on the fort which would in time become Fort Sumter. The State of South Carolina ceded this land to Congress and the Government of the United States, which accepted the lands in conformance with Article I, Section 8, Clause 17 of the U.S. Constitution.

Thus, even though Fort Sumter was otherwise within South Carolina, this land was ceded to Congress and the United States Government decades before the Civil War. Secession from the United States by South Carolina in December of 1860 could only nominally take with her lands which were still in her possession and not those which had already been legally given up long before.

When the South fired on Northern troops stationed at Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, the South therefore actually began armed conflict against Northern soil. That war would not be settled until the South conceded defeat four years later, with a combined loss of life on both sides amounting to 620,000 souls.

Besides the tragic loss of life, the country also suffered terrible economic devastation from the war; at least for everyone except the new national banking associations, that is. The War Between the States finally secured the permanency of the national banks in America which had proved wholly elusive before the war.

In the end, all the money borrowed to pay for the war was owed, at compound interest, to people like Charles Cunningham, III who were easily able to increase their fortunes many times over through the carnage of war.

The country following the Civil War proved to be wholly unlike the country before the war, government overreach having been unleashed, never to again to be contained.

Through war, former government restrictions fell by the wayside as government began treading new ground, doing things never-before imagined, acting in all cases whatsoever, with wild abandon.

The Independent Treasury of 1846 which had once prohibited government funds from being deposited into any bank under punishment for felony embezzlement was effectively gutted as each of the new national banking associations in 1863 were specifically allowed to serve as a depository for the public money.

The Independent Treasury would linger on until 1920, when its last vestiges were summarily cancelled seven years after enactment of the Federal Reserve Act in a May 29th appropriations bill.

Lawful tender money also took a direct hit during the Civil War, as the first paper currencies under the U.S. Constitution were first declared a legal tender in 1862 through an orchestrated legal sleight of hand, the hallmark of government overreach which the Adamson and Evanston men would later research.

But it was Charles Cunningham, V who helped coordinate the American gold confiscation in 1933 who accumulated more wealth through his bank in a few short years than all the wealth which had accumulated over the previous four generations of Cunningham's combined.

When Americans turned in their gold bullion, gold coin, and Gold Certificates under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's April 5, 1933 Executive Order No. 6102, they did not turn it in to the United States Treasury, but into the Federal Reserve Banks, as commanded. The banks in turn 'paid' the people for their gold in forms of paper money without any tie to or claim on gold.

In the Gold Reserve Act of 1934, enacted on January 30th of that year, the Federal Reserve banks then turned over the gold bullion and gold coin to the U.S. Treasury, but the banks kept the Gold Certificates which Americans had 'given' them.

The U.S. Government paid the Federal Reserve banks for the collected gold coin and gold bullion with new government-issued Gold Certificates, those same certificates which "all persons" were supposedly already prohibited from owning.

But while the government eventually got all the physical gold, all government really got was the legal responsibility to safe-keep the gold, at its own expense; the true legal owners of that stored gold were the banks who owned the Gold Certificates which were the pink-slip titles to that stored gold.

The day after the rights to the 'confiscated' gold was transferred from the banks to the U.S. Treasury, F.D.R., by Presidential Proclamation No. 2072, devalued the gold dollar from 25.8 grains of gold nine-tenths fine, to 15 and 5/21 grains, the drop of pure gold originally valued at \$20.67 per ounce to \$35.00, the new dollar being a mere 60% of its former self.

The government thus got its cut in their gold 'confiscation' ploy, as now the Gold Certificates payable in dollars which had been given to the Federal Reserve banks suddenly held claim to far less gold than the day before. But evidently this was simply the arrangement worked out between the banks and the government beforehand, each now getting their appropriate take of the haul.

But of course Congress cannot transfer the legislative powers for the whole country which the Constitution permanently vests with them over to any government official, thus this new devalued dollar was only another type of dollar for the government seat. The American dollar remained unchanged, being only full-bodied gold and silver coins at historic valuations and weights.

The Constitution, after all, guarantees to every State of the Union a Republican Form of Government under Article IV, Section 4; a government where elected *legislative* members enact law according to their enumerated powers.

Article I, Section 6, Clause 2 contains the primary constitutional teeth enforcing the principle of legislative representation for the whole of the United States, outside of the government seat, preventing any person who holds any office under the United States from simultaneously holding a legislative seat in Congress.

Since Article I, Section 1 specifically and permanently *vests* all the delegated legislative powers *in Congress*, no officer of the United States could *ever* exercise those delegated and enumerated legislative powers throughout the whole country.

Of course, there is also Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, which expressly charges Congress with the duty to enact “*all Laws*” which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution *all* the powers vested in Congress and in the government of the United States, *including* any department or officer.

The Constitution thus amply protects the whole of the United States of America from government officers in the executive or judicial branches from exercising any legislative authority whatsoever, including regulating the amount of gold in our dollar. But in the government seat, it is here evidently another matter entirely.

Although legislative representation is the fundamental building block of American government, in the government seat there is actually no legislative representation whatsoever for area residents in Congress. Neither is this district a “State” which is guaranteed it.

There is in the government seat no direct constitutional conflict for government officers to enact law or regulations held as law, since legislative representation is not here guaranteed. Nor is there here any direct constitutional conflict if the President issues edicts such as declaring a new lightweight gold dollar for the government seat, since a dollar without gold had been here declared a legal tender in 1862.

But the U.S. Constitution also has a word or two to say about property, including specifically that no person, anywhere, can be deprived of it without due process and just compensation.

Paper ‘money’ without any tie to gold is certainly not ‘just compensation’ for gold, unless a trader willingly agrees to it. Thus, even in the government seat, people even without legislative representation cannot be deprived of their life, liberty or property without due process and just compensation.

Bare Liberty

And, of course, neither is a Presidential executive order commanding Americans to turn in their gold under threats of \$10,000 fines and 10-year imprisonments ‘due process’.

Therefore President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s executive order could not legally do what has long been historically believed; Americans were never actually prohibited from owning gold, nor were they as a whole ever legally required to turn over their gold to anyone, even in the government seat.

The legal impairments of Roosevelt’s gold confiscation executive order are most obvious by comparing Sections 1 and 2 of the executive order.

Looking at Section 2 of the April 5, 1933 executive order first, it appears quite ominous, saying that “All persons are hereby required to deliver...to a Federal Reserve Bank...all gold coin, gold bullion and Gold Certificates.”

Section 1 of the order seems to bind citizens even further, saying that “For the purposes of this regulation...the term ‘person’ means any individual, partnership, association or corporation.”

With “all persons” being “required to deliver” *all* their gold “to a Federal Reserve Bank”, and learning that “*any* individual, partnership, association or corporation” may be a “person,” there doesn’t seem to be much wiggle room allowing anyone to avoid turning in their gold.

But then realizes that not all “individuals”, not all “partnerships”, not all “associations” and not all “corporations” are necessarily “persons,” *but only that any of them can be.*

And that difference is monumental. This inconsistency is the small crack, the inherent flaw, the fatal dose of logic which breaks open wide America’s so-called gold ‘confiscation’, showing it to be but a legal ruse, mere mumbo-jumbo political sleight of hand.

Although the government and banks wanted everyone to think that all individuals, all partnerships, all associations, and all corporations are all “persons” for purposes of this dastardly regulation, it is relatively easy to prove they are not.

First off, one must note that there are no express exceptions given anywhere whatsoever to the proffered rule that “the term ‘person’ means any individual, partnership, association or corporation.” Thus, if each and *every* individual, partnership, association or corporation was actually meant to be a ‘person’ for the regulation, *then so would the Federal Reserve banks themselves be a ‘person’*.

Thus, if that were the case, then *some* persons are here being required to turn in their gold *to other* persons. If that be the case, then it sure pays to learn who is the first type and who is the second.

But this inherent contradiction cannot stand, that some ‘persons’ are required to deliver and some ‘persons’ are allowed to receive; somewhere else there must be some differentiation mechanism to decipher these different ‘persons’ which is not here acknowledged.

Apologists may attempt to argue that since ‘persons’ were required to deliver their gold to a ‘bank’, that ‘banks’ therefore did not need a specific exemption from being a ‘person’.

But even if this case was conceded, however, it still absolutely proves that not *every* individual, not *every* partnership, not *every* association or not *every* corporation was a ‘person’ for purposes of that regulation.

And thus it would stand to reason that if there was *one* exception to the rule which was not expressly named for being a ‘person’, that there might perhaps be others also, certainly to prevent a mere executive order from conflicting with fundamental rights protected by the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution for the United States of America, for example.

And, of course, American government was founded upon the belief that government was to provide for the *general* welfare, that which was *indivisible* between all parties, as opposed to the *specific* welfare, the benefit of one party at the expense of another.

Thus, even if banks did not need specific named exemption, that they were nevertheless designated as the places where every other person was required to bring their gold still wouldn't save the executive order, as these bank persons improperly received gold while all other persons were required to pay gold. This robbing of Peter to pay Paul cannot be condoned by law.

Apologists for government overreach may also attempt to argue that the Federal Reserve banks are "federal" and are therefore naturally exempt from the regulation, but the original 1913 Federal Reserve Act easily proves they are not 'government' banks. But even if they were, strictly speaking, the executive order still did not limit 'persons' only to *private* organizations; public corporations didn't receive any special exemption by any clear words of the order either.

Section 2 of the original 1913 Federal Reserve Act shows that the Federal Reserve banks are not actually 'federal' as far as pertaining to the government, no more 'federal' than Federal Express.

This section discusses subscriptions of bank stock necessary to allow creation of the individual Federal Reserve banks. Existing national banking associations, State banks and the public were given first opportunity to subscribe to purchases of new bank stock, and only if or when these sources proved insufficient at meeting the minimum threshold levels needed to establish the new banks was the bank's organizational committee then allowed to "allot to the United States" the amount of stock to meet those minimum obligations.

And even any bank stock ever "held by the Secretary of the Treasury" could be "disposed of for the benefit of the United States" at such times as the Secretary "shall determine."

Such words show that the while the government could own some of the bank stock, government wouldn't even necessarily own it for long and that it did not take any extraordinary measures to dispense with that bank stock.

Section 2 of the 1913 bank Act also shows that only member banks of the Federal Reserve System could hold Federal Reserve bank stock with voting rights; both the general public and the U.S. Government were actually prohibited by the 1913 Federal Reserve Act from owning any stock with voting rights.

The Federal Reserve banks and member banks of the Federal Reserve System were not and are not government entities, although they were created and allowed by Congressional charter.

The bottom line of Roosevelt's 1933 gold confiscation decree is that either the Federal Reserve banks are 'persons' or they are not. If they are a 'person', then not all persons necessarily have to turn over their gold to some other person.

If they are not a 'person', then not 'all' individuals, not 'all' partnerships, not 'all' associations, or not 'all' corporations are 'persons' for the purposes of the gold confiscation regulation.

The government and the banks cannot have it both ways. The government cannot exempt the banks from the order and then consistently maintain that 'all' persons have to turn in their gold to a bank, with persons being defined as all individuals, all partnerships, all associations and all corporations.

With such inherent inconsistencies as found in the so-called gold confiscation order, it is therefore necessary to look elsewhere to make sense of all of the nonsense, of some persons being required to deliver their gold to other persons who were allowed to receive gold.

Understanding how the executive order could 'require' all 'persons' to send their gold to the banks becomes possible by realizing that Section 16 of the original 1913 Federal Reserve Act institutes a 'fractional reserve' banking system.

Bare Liberty

In other words, while the banks could loan, invest and even speculate with their depositors' money, they were required to keep a fraction of those funds in gold in reserve for normal withdrawals by their customers.

By Section 16 of the Act, banks had to keep on hand or on reserve 35% of their depositors' funds in gold, and 40% reserves for any Federal Reserve notes the banks issued.

The 12 Federal Reserve banks and their many member banks were also specifically required to maintain gold in the U.S. Treasury sufficient to back their Federal Reserve note issue liabilities according to the Treasurer's discretion, but in no amount less than 5%.

In other words, the 1913 Federal Reserve Act allowed banks and their shareholders to speculate and emit paper currencies, but nevertheless required the banks to deposit gold with the treasury to cover their liabilities. In this instance and for purposes of understanding, it is little different in principle from the government acting as a broker and the banks acting as speculators.

And as any speculator who's lived through a downturn in the market knows, when they are operating at low margins, in any resulting downturn which goes against their position, their broker will call them and tell them that they are 'required' to send him more money to cover their exposure.

President Roosevelt's executive order was simply that margin call to the member banks and their shareholders who had over-leveraged their accounts and who suffered a downturn in their positions. The President was now telling the Secretary of the Treasury to require those persons who had legally bound themselves to send in gold to the Treasury to now cover their liabilities, because unprecedented numbers of the American public were lining up at the banking windows, all demanding their money, their gold.

The only 'persons' who could be 'required' to send gold to the banks, gold which would eventually find its way to the Treasury,

were those persons who voluntarily entered into agreements with the Secretary of the Treasury under the 1913 Federal Reserve Act to purchase bank stock and therefore maintain sufficient gold with the Secretary to cover their banknote liabilities, gold sufficient in the Secretary's discretion to cover their full exposure, if need be.

No one else was a 'person' who could be required to deliver their gold anywhere!

Of course, that is not how the President's order was ever enforced; instead it was all the banks' customers who were inferred to bring in their gold to the bank. What those customers weren't ever told was that their gold was delivered to line the emptied pockets the over-extended bankers who over-speculated with their depositor's money and the government was called in to help these poor bankers avoid the bankruptcy to which the rest of the nation was exposed.

This was the tale which Mark had carefully explained in his book *Monetary Laws* which was posted at the PatriotCorps.org website.

Of course, Charles VII was able to leverage the family wealth even further with the 2007 financial crisis, pocketing vast sums of wealth in short order which would have been impossible to garner in long periods of relative financial stability.

But Mark Evanston's discovery of his fourth great-grandfather's accumulation of research which Chester Adamson had collected from Gordon Radcliff's father and Peyton Phillips' friend cast a dark pall over the Cunningham name after showing Charles Cunningham, III as chief promoter of the American Civil War for private gain.

Now Mark Evanston's proposed cure threatened the future of the 1913 Federal Reserve System itself, which system necessarily relied upon the exclusive legislative power of Congress for the government seat, just like the first and second banks of the United States of 1791 and 1816 and the 1863 national banking association banks had all relied on that same power in the past.

Federal Reserve notes therefore relied on the exclusive legislative power of Congress for the government seat, just like the 1862 legal tender notes had required on that same power, as careful reading of the 1871 *Legal Tender Cases* proves, as Mark showed in *Patriot Quest*.

All these national banks had relied upon the power of Congress to exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever for the government seat, even though such an admission of the true source of authority for Congress to establish a bank was expressly admitted only by Alexander Hamilton in his 1791 opinion on the constitutionality of the first bank of the United States.

Charles VII found solace in realizing that it would be wholly impractical for the United States to switch from the Federal Reserve banking system to some other system within any short period of time, certainly without bringing about an utter collapse of the economy and cessation of all trade beyond rudimentary barter.

Economic pundits had often used the phrase ‘too big to fail’ to reference any number of business conglomerates; well Charles certainly knew the Federal Reserve system with all its member banks were far too big for the U.S. government to let fail, as the government bailouts of 1933-34 and 2007 easily prove.

More importantly, however, it was these very banks which held massive amounts of government debt, nominally holding and controlling the very purse strings of government itself, enabling the banks to coerce government for continued support if the government ever finally desired otherwise.

Yes, Charles VII realized that the banking establishment absolutely needed the counsel of the seventh generation of Cunningham’s which had supported the American national banking establishments since their founding.

“We’re going home,” Charles VII stated to his wife.

“It’s about time; I’ve missed my friends dearly,” she responded.
“I can be ready in two hours.”

“We’ll leave in the morning,” Charles responded.

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Steve Frederickson hadn’t been on the lecture circuit as a presenter in the past four months, knowing it was necessary for their growing organization to help safeguard those who were best-suited for disseminating the important information.

Steve and his brother Randy strategized security in regular weekly discussions with their understudies, and daily between one another.

There were increasing reports of growing resentment against the Patriot Corps by those firmly entrenched deep within government and especially in the so-called ‘private’ industries which fed off the federal largesse.

Rumors of threats began circulating against Janet, Peter, and Mark.

Steve and Randy began training a small task force who would look into the credibility of these threats, and recommend appropriate protocols to mitigate their danger.

The intelligence gathered was tough to decipher accurately, to give a proper assessment of their likelihood of being carried out and therefore causing harm. So the security detail did the best they could, with the tools they had at their disposal, and with any help they could receive from trusted colleagues favorable to their point of view who were still in the industry.

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Charles Cunningham, VII arrived in New York City on May 1, 2015, one year after he fled for the Cayman Islands.

Charles had arranged a top-level meeting of his banking and high-finance colleagues for the following Monday morning, as he didn't want to waste any time implementing his protect-the-banking-system-plan at all cost.

In a scene reminiscent of Charles Cunningham, III when he organized the pivotal private meeting of his banking colleagues with Peyton Phillips, Charles VII began implementing his plan, although he had none of Charles' III hesitancy in speaking plainly.

"Borrowing from his own terminology, it is Mark Evanston who needs to be silenced 'Once and For All'; he has been a thorn in our sides longer than any of us should have ever tolerated," Charles VII began.

"If I would have found the courage to take care of him when my men had the chance several years ago, we wouldn't be in the position we are today.

"You may be surprised to hear me speak so plainly, but now is not the time for the squeamish or faint of heart; if anyone is uncomfortable with such overt discussions, please leave our presence now and do not return in the near future, for we are truly at war to preserve our way of life, to keep our banks and banking system, our literal money machines.

"Although Mark Evanston must be silenced, he must first be discredited. When I looked into his past several years ago, I found nothing credible to use to discredit him. This merely means that we will directly help facilitate that downfall or fabricate what we need.

"Evanston went through a fair amount of trauma at my men's hands, thus we know he suffered debilitating injuries, meaning he suffered pain. Thus it is credible that he got hooked on pain medication and like any junkie, began hiding that truth from his family and friends while he drug himself deeper into the gutter.

“So, we spike the food he eats, the water he drinks, the air he breaths with potent drugs to get him acting erratically. We make appointments with him in questionable places, with our covert colleagues offering large contributions to his cause to induce him to show up, while getting pictures of him in inappropriate circumstances.

“Being a man, we seduce him with a beautiful woman, driving a wedge of instability into his personal life.

“We leave a paper trail which intimately ties him in with various criminal elements.

“While he has been squeaky-clean to date, now we simply turn up the pressure cooker to make him squeak like a frightened mouse being chased by a deranged cat.

“We will make him suffer for all the pain he has been causing us and once that pain becomes manifest to his friends, family and co-workers; we either drive him to suicide or make it appear so, taking his family and perhaps a few loved ones or sympathetic government officials with him.

“We must show that Mark Evanston is a stark, raving mad sociopath, bent on destroying modern society because he failed to make it in business on his own, that life was too much for him to bear.

“To discredit the work which threatens us, we must discredit the creator of that work. We must make Mark Evanston so hated that the mere mention of his name sends shivers down peoples’ spines, that no one would dare utter his name or ever have the guts to mention his work.”

Charles VII continued to lay out his proposal for discrediting Mark Evanston for another 10 minutes, making sure everyone in attendance understood well his plans and were on-board with them.

“But Evanston has released his work into the public domain, even allowing other authors and researchers to take his work as their own and build upon it,” commented one of Cunningham’s fellow attendees. “We expect to see different manifestations of Evanston’s work under other authors very shortly. What do we do about that? That free flow of information is especially tough to stop.”

“I have to admit the lack of a copyright on Evanston’s work throws our efforts for a loop,” responded Charles. “I didn’t see that coming. Who in their right mind doesn’t want to enjoy the fruits of their labor; who doesn’t protect their work from copyright infringement so they can charge whatever the market will bear as they keep an utter monopoly over their work?”

“Basically, we attack each of these people in the same way as we attack Evanston, if need be,” Charles continued. “We make the topic off-limits to anyone without a death-wish. We create folklore stories that authors who write on this topic will be forever jinxed; we write horoscopes forecasting doom for anyone who reads such information; we make up voodoo chants, witchcraft incantations and magic spells of every possible mystic faith to invoke terrifying fear on the topic at hand.

“We have amassed a tremendous amount of power over many generations and now is the time we must use that power to maintain and solidify our grip on the common man’s throat. We dare not flinch at this critical juncture, we ought not let our hearts skip a beat, and we cannot blink.

“We must intimidate, we must frighten, we must coerce, and we must oppress. We must use strong central government as it was meant to be used; the strong must absolutely rule the meek, the powerful must exercise total dominion over all mere mortals who are incapable of making important decisions for themselves.”

Chapter Nine

After the local presentation ended, a man probably in his early forties came up to ask Mark for a personal appointment so the two of them could discuss things in greater detail. Finding an agreeable date and time, they set up lunch meeting at a local café.

Mark met Alan Johnson for lunch at noon on Wednesday, May 13th.

“Good afternoon, Mr. Johnson,” Mark offered, as his luncheon partner arrived a few minutes after the appointed hour.

“Sorry I’m late,” offered Alan.

“Oh, no problem,” answered Mark. “I was just seated, so everything is just fine.”

The two men made small talk until the waitress had taken their orders and brought drinks; Mark’s drink consisting of a large glass of ice-water.

“I want to learn more about Patriot Corps and your plans to help restore America. I would very much like to support your cause financially.” Alan stated with his mouth, but not necessarily with his body language, which made him seem not quite as enthusiastic as his words would otherwise seem to indicate.

“I think the Good Lord’s example in the Bible provides us the best example of providing true aid,” responded Mark, who normally wasn’t very adept at picking up non-verbal cues.

“Oh really?” asked Alan. “To which example are you referring?”

“When Jesus first told His apostles what they needed to do — to sell their belongings and give their money to the poor and then follow after Him,” Mark offered. “It wasn’t their money or their property Jesus wanted, but their hearts, their souls, their minds, their efforts, forevermore.”

“Oh, is that all?” questioned Alan. “I’d rather give cash.”

“Yes, too few of people are willing to commit much of their time, energy, or themselves to their causes; people, especially those of greater wealth, typically prefer someone else to do the actual work.

“Their money is thus really only given as a pinch-hit, as a poor substitute for their time, but it really takes a lot of people stepping up to the plate and swinging the bat to win the ballgame,” Mark answered. “That is why the rich man was said to have difficulty entering the Kingdom of Heaven, because he wasn’t really willing to give of himself, but instead only a little bit of his ample money.”

Mark wasn’t sure why he had felt so compelled to drive home this point so strongly with this particular person; perhaps it seemed that Mr. Johnson was too eager to part with his money but too reserved with himself, as if he was spending someone else’s money. But it was inherent contradictions such as this which didn’t ever add up which Mark was learning to better sense, even if he didn’t even understand the contradictions consciously.

Alan grew increasingly uncomfortable, finally saying, “I don’t really have much time to offer at this point, but I do have money to help the cause,” as he got out his checkbook.

“I would like to make a twenty-five hundred dollar donation to your cause,” Alan stated, with a certain swagger about him.

“That is indeed very generous of you; thanks,” Mark responded, before he continued, “but America’s founding patriots, when signing the Declaration of Independence, mutually pledged to one another their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

“You’ll notice that they did not hold their fortunes as sacred, but only their honor, as they were wholly-committed to their cause; hook, line and sinker. That pledge of their lives, after all, was no idle pledge.

“By signing their names to the Declaration, they were committing high treason against the British King.

Bare Liberty

“Tradition holds that John Hancock, as President of the Second Continental Congress, signed the Declaration in his bold manner so King George III would not need spectacles to know who was the traitor.

“The British punishment for treason at the time was to be drawn or dragged to the noose by horse, hanged until unconscious, revived and gutted, with their entrails being burnt; then the traitor was beheaded and quartered, even by having their hands and feet tied to four separate horses who would run in four separate directions to pull off the limbs.”

“Ugh! My food isn’t digesting quite so well,” commented Mr. Johnson, who, not looking his best, excused himself to the restroom.

Upon returning a few minutes later, Alan responded, seemingly in words the most generous he could muster, “today’s lunch didn’t exactly go as I expected, but nevertheless I’m thankful for your work and here’s my donation.”

“I appreciate very much your generous donation of money,” Mark offered, as Alan Johnson turned and quickly left the café. Mark didn’t expect to hear from him again anytime soon.

It wasn’t that Mark was becoming hardened to fair-weather patriots, as they were everywhere, but he found insincerity sometimes difficult to overlook.

Mark did not expect his fellow Americans to necessarily or even be naturally drawn to liberty; too many had become perhaps too well adjusted to paternal government oversight to suddenly desire liberty and limited government.

Once America restored limited government and individual liberty based upon personal responsibility, Mark was confident the vast majority of Americans would come to appreciate them for the vast improvement in their lives and personal situations, with greater security and peace of mind coupled yet with ample freedom.

But such conclusions would not necessarily be reached before those results were achieved, and in any uncomfortable transition period, undoubtedly many Americans would even long for the ‘good old days’ of excessive government overreach.

Alan Johnson was bothered by his lunch meeting; it did not at all go as he had anticipated. He wasn’t sure how or even what to tell his bosses, people who demanded from him positive results.

He was instructed to get in tight with Mark Evanston, to lure him in with increasing donations into increasingly promiscuous situations, which Mark would surely feel compelled to enter to accept the escalating contributions.

Instead, Alan Johnson felt as if Mark had slapped him in the face, and he wasn’t sure even why. They had met in a respectable establishment and Alan had donated a respectable amount of money. He wasn’t even sure Mark would agree to meet him again for lunch at a nice cafe, let alone now in some sleazy nightclub for dinner and drinks as he had next planned.

It wasn’t as if Mark Evanston was holding out for larger donations from wealthier contributors, for he usually met with people who had very little extra money for even their own basic needs, let alone have extra for donations to give to others.

Alan informed his bosses of his impression of the meeting, and they didn’t immediately have any recommendations, contacting their bosses instead who contacted Charles Cunningham, VII.

Charles relayed the message back down the pipeline that all was not lost, simply for Alan Johnson to appear to become more fully committed to the Patriot Corps’ cause personally. He should also begin increasing his circle of influence by bringing big-money contributors into the fold and to send in the feminine influence.

Alan sought out another private meeting with Mark, this time for dinner. Alan planned to bring along his ‘girlfriend’, Isabella Downs, but didn’t tell Mark over the phone.

Bare Liberty

Isabella was of course being brought into Mark's life to seduce him, so incriminating pictures of the two of them could eventually be taken to throw Mark's personal life into disarray.

Isabella was as stunningly beautiful as she was remarkably shallow. She was well-suited for her intended role, for it was as if she lived and breathed sex.

At a slender five feet, nine inches tall, with long curly dark hair which fell to the small of her back, few men inclined toward such fine physical features and affectionate personality would ever resist her seasoned overtures, even if they were deeply committed to another woman.

Isabella was well-known within her circle of influence for her uncanny ability to lure married men away from their marriage vows at will and was even known to have set several gay men straight, simply by showing them what they had been missing.

When Alan insisted on meeting for dinner, Mark insisted that his wife Penny come with them, even though he didn't realize that Alan was planning on bringing Isabella. Alan wasn't sure whether to meet Mark over breakfast or lunch or with Penny at dinner.

Breakfast or lunch simply didn't seem like overly-appropriate hours of the day for romantic notions between Isabella and Mark to grab hold like Alan wanted, so Alan agreed to dinner with both Mark and Penny. That toss of the coin would ultimately prove unfortunate for Alan, although the flipside wouldn't really have been any better.

Alan and Isabella were the first to arrive at the restaurant, Alan not wanting to be even a minute late this time. Mark and Penny arrived several minutes before the 7:00 p.m. dinner meeting, which was an hour later than they usually cared to eat.

Alan ordered a bottle of wine, along with four glasses. Mark informed the waiter that two glasses were ample, for neither he nor Penny consumed alcohol.

Alan didn't immediately know what to do, as Isabella stepped into seductress mode to lure Mark into accepting a glass as she placed her hand on his shoulder to recommend that he "try a small sip of the full-bodied wine, for it was absolutely divine."

Mark respectfully declined Isabella's gracious offer as Penny cast a disapproving scowl her way, letting the sultry temptress know to keep her ample cleavage and sharp claws to herself.

Alan recuperated after a brief pause, knowing he needed to pull off a spectacular performance to avoid having to send another unsatisfactory report up the chain-of-command.

"Well, Mark, what about an appetizer? I hear the crab cakes and stuffed mushrooms are excellent," Alan offered, hoping to change the discussion from drink to food where the latter would perhaps 'hit the mark', so to speak.

As Penny had long before learned, the way to a man's heart was through his stomach and Mark was certainly no exception.

"Either one sounds great," Mark responded.

"Why not both?" asked Alan. "After all, with four of us, two appetizers are not at all out of the question."

"You needn't bother ordering any appetizers on account of me," offered Penny, not that either sounded bad, but she didn't want her host to go to a lot of expense for her and Mark, especially since she didn't want to 'owe' this couple any favors.

"Your attractive figure won't ever notice having both," commented the voluptuous Isabella.

"I don't like eating too much food too late in the evening," Penny replied, "but thanks for the compliment."

"I hope I age half as gracefully as you," offered the young femme fatale, being but half of Penny's age.

Bare Liberty

Penny wasn't quite sure how to respond, so she just smiled. Tonight was going to be a long night, she surmised. Penny didn't like entertaining, and tonight's events were prime examples of the reasons why. But since Mark was invited to dinner, Penny also thought it be best to accompany him, as the chance for bad things to happen seemed to rise exponentially after dark.

Mark ordered a New York steak with sliced Portobello mushrooms and garlic mashed potatoes with French bread and a Caesar salad.

Penny ordered a stuffed sole dinner plate with steamed vegetables and wild rice.

The dinner was fabulous and atmosphere pleasant, but the conversation was strained. Alan admitted that Mark's comments from the other day had lead Alan to some serious soul-searching, grappling over recommendations which he hadn't at first wanted to hear.

But after careful reconsideration, Alan told Mark that he realized that he should cut back on his hours at work so he could devote more of his time to getting into the trenches with the Patriot Corps and help effect real change.

With that, Alan got out a \$5,000 check and gave it to Isabella for her to give to Mark, her hand resting in Mark's a moment too long. Penny gave Mark a stern look, informing him that she was not happy with the night's events in any way, shape, or form; it was Isabella's shape and form which were particularly bothersome.

"And I know where there are a lot more donations like that, if you'll allow me help you kick things up several notches," Alan offered, before he continued. "I have many well-connected friends and well-heeled business associates who will be glad to help out, especially if we host a private party in a posh downtown hotel ballroom with overnight accommodations so they needn't worry about driving home.

“Of course the overnight stay with the complimentary food and ample drink will allow Isabella’s many friends to dispense a little sensual comfort. Yes, I’m confident my friends would donate amply to your cause in such a situation.

“I bet that, after expenses, you could pull in \$50,000 in just one night. And that is right here, in Portland. If you went to Vegas, or even Seattle or San Francisco, your take could be multiple of that.”

“I am afraid we are wholly on opposite pages, Mr. Johnson,” Mark replied in a stern manner, as he began distancing himself even further from the apparent high-roller.

“Your proposal reminds me of an old friend who found success at nearly every step in his career, who, after arriving at its peak which he hadn’t one time thought possible, finally committed suicide after suffering years of depression,” Mark began.

“My high-school buddy was inspired by our civics teacher to study American history, political science, and law. He became a legislative page, attended the right under-graduate college, got into law school and onto law review, and married a beautiful wife.

“He clerked under a respectable judge, and later ran successfully for a city council seat. After several terms he was appointed to fill out the remainder of a term of a State Representative who had died and after that my buddy won re-election several times. He moved up to the State Senate and later ran for Congress, where he suffered his first real setback and found himself outside of the political arena for the first time of his entire adult life.

“His first political failure was a real eye-opener for him, for he realized election failure was equivalent to political death. Losing political relevance bothered him terribly. He doubled down for the next congressional election and hired a proven campaign manager who had pulled off some remarkable election wins for people who weren’t given even a glimmer of chance on the onset.

“This campaign manager really greased the skids and pulled out all the stops. He organized campaign events which were the talk of the town, bringing in rising stars or celebrities just past their prime who offered their talents at reasonable rates, but who were still strong draws.

“With ample wine, women and song, the money poured in from the events like flowing rivers of milk and honey.

“The campaign coffers were soon overflowing, and this time my friend won the election by a healthy margin. And that’s when his problems really began. He had accepted so much money from so many people on every possible side of any argument, he soon found that every person who invested money in him now wanted their investment to pay off.

“He was pulled in every direction possible on every issue just when he most needed his moral compass. But tragically he no longer had any bearing whatsoever for navigating safely past the rocky shores he was nearing, for he had sold his soul to win elections.

“And as soon as he won his first election to Congress, he started looking toward re-election only two short years away. While as an incumbent he was better-assured to win re-election, he suddenly found that the stakes of losing had now risen exponentially.

“After he got there, he learned that it would be one thing to have never made it to the top, but it was altogether another to reach it and then having to worry about falling from that height, for not only was it a long way down, but now everyone he knew expected his continued success. All he could think about was what could he do next if he disgraced himself with a loss?

“But there was no way for him to keep all of his contributors happy, because they came from too many sides of the table. He diluted his message to the lowest common denominator to keep from offending anyone, in attempts to continue getting re-election money from as many of his original contributors as possible.

“On every issue, he now sought to take the pulse of his contributors to gauge which vote would cause him the least amount of political damage; which vote would cost his re-election campaign fund the least.

“No longer having any rudder or compass of his own, he was tossed about in the treacherous seas of political turmoil with no particular place to go.

“Each successful re-election campaign served as another trophy which became but another reminder that he had sold his soul to win elections and that he no longer stood for anything. The deep commitment to the causes of his youth was long-gone.

“He sank further into depression, until the only way out he could find was suicide, which took the form of a .45 caliber bullet through the back of his mouth after a drunken booze-fest with several prostitutes.”

Alan and Isabella sat there, stunned. To say that the evening didn't go well was an understatement of epic proportions. But even more oddly to them, the evening turned for the worse just after Alan gave another large donation to the very organization into which their guest poured his heart, soul and mind.

Mark continued on, informing Alan and Isabella that, perhaps unlike a few organizations, the Patriot Corps did not exist merely as an expedient means for receiving donations.

In other words, donations to the Patriot Corps were helpful to achieve its desired end, of educating Americans about government tyranny and the need for his Once and For All Amendment.

But with that said, donations could also serve to destroy the Patriot Corps, for if the Patriot Corps were to lose sight of its true purpose and instead sought to merely please its donors to increase its contribution base, the Patriot Corps would flounder and its critical message would be lost.

In other words, *how* the Patriot Corps solicited funds was even more important than receiving them.

“Successful people are quite used to getting what they want, and those successful people who give large sums of money understandably have strong opinions on how their donated money should be used and thus often attach strings directing its use. After all, it would be considered foolish for any donor to give large amounts of money without being assured that it would be spent wisely. It is a fool and his money which are soon parted and no donor ever wants to be made a fool of, especially with his or her own donated money.

“But if the recipient allows his or her will to be bent in order to receive a donation, then that original vision becomes blurred to the lowest common denominator of the various donors. The recipient has therefore taken that fateful first step in losing his or her way, to be left wandering down any or all of the various paths pushed by various donors each with differing agendas.

“Large monetary donations thus often make it even *more* difficult for the visionary to actually achieve his or her dream, at least undiluted from its original form and without compromises which decrease the likelihood of ever achieving the end desired. It is too easy for large donations to pollute the visions of the founders of the organization, let alone the next generation who may have little of the deep commitment to the original cause as did the founder.

“Money is a helpful means to reach a desired end, as long as it doesn’t become the end, which is so very easy to do, so strong is the lure of easy money.”

“I don’t have any idea what to say,” Alan offered as truthfully as he ever offered anything, now wholly lost. “Do you want my check, or are you refusing it?”

“The Patriot Corps is not interested in accepting donations which have any obligation tied to them,” Mark replied, “so if you have any future interest of attempting to steer the Patriot Corps in any direction whatsoever, you will find yourself sadly disappointed.

“Very few people who make small donations would ever think that they could hope to influence an organization through their individual donation, thus many small donations are inherently safer for an organization to remain true to its proper calling. The Patriot Corps doesn’t mind working within limited means, even if it stalls our progress, as sad as that result would be.

“We intend to make consistent progress toward our end goal, even without *any* donated funds if necessary, rather than risk losing our way and wandering aimlessly in search of our next donation which would merely serve as yet another drain on precious and limited resources.”

Alan didn’t know what to do. He looked at Isabella, who offered him no help. She was sent to seduce, not to offer advice on something she could not even follow.

Alan knew his bosses expected him to donate time and especially money to the Patriot Corps, in attempt to get intricately involved in the organization so it could be destroyed from within.

But Alan’s orders pushed Mark further away, rather than reeling him in.

“No, I want to give money to the Patriot Corps to support its efforts,” Alan offered, since he was first ordered to give money in the hopes of later effecting change, so giving the boss’s money he would do while he hoped to be able to effect change at a later date, somehow.

“I’m sorry your friend lost his way,” Alan offered. “Elected public officials have been known to occasionally self-destruct under intense public scrutiny. I guess that is one of the hazards of holding a high public office under the United States.”

“Although he was elected and although he nominally served the public, he wasn’t an ‘official’, for he did not hold an ‘office under the United States’ as you suggest,” Mark replied, somewhat cryptically.

“What do you mean?” asked Alan. “You said he was elected to Congress as a U.S. Representative; therefore he held an office, thus he was an officer of the United States and therefore he was a government official.”

“No, that is utterly wrong,” Mark answered. “Yes, he was a Congressman. But because of the absolute wall of separation between the legislative branch of government and the other two branches which form the government body, the Government of the United States, he was not and absolutely could not be ‘an officer of the United States’. Because he was a member of Congress, he could not be a part of the body of government.

“Members of Congress are elected by and represent the individual States of the Union when those members meet together in the meeting of all the States of the Union, i.e., when they meet together as a Congress of the United States. Members of Congress do not make up part of the government body which consists of the executive and judicial branches.

“Congress is not really an ‘entity’ as is the government of the United States, the executive and judicial branches. This is easiest to recognize by looking at the Bill of Rights, where it begins with the passage, ‘Congress of the United States, begun and held at the City of New York, on Wednesday the Fourth of March, one thousand seven hundred and eighty nine...’

“Congress cannot be an ‘entity’, for although an entity can perhaps be said to ‘begin’, it certainly cannot ever be ‘held’. It makes no sense to say “entity, begun and held...” But one can begin and hold a meeting, and therefore say ‘meeting of the States, begun and held at the City of New York, on Wednesday the Fourth of March’ and have it make perfect sense. Understood properly, Congress is an ‘event’, rather than an ‘entity’.

“The executive and judicial branches of government are wholly distinct from the legislative branch, together serving as the body of government, the officers of the government.

“The Constitution mandates this separation quite consistently, allowing only a few explicit crossovers for limited purposes, such as the Vice President of the United States being the named President of the Senate to give him something to do as he waited to see if he was ever needed to exercise the powers of the President in extraordinary situations.”

“I’ve heard of a separation between the branches, but I don’t know what you’re talking about, again,” Alan muttered, growing extremely tired of being on opposite pages as the man he was assigned to lead down a predetermined path. Alan just didn’t see himself making any actual headway; it didn’t seem that he even spoke the same language as his intended target.

“I know for a fact that members of Congress swear an oath to ‘well and faithfully discharge the duties of the *office* on which (they) are about to enter’, even to the point of appealing to God for help. The direct reference to an ‘office’ proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that they hold one and that they are therefore government ‘officers’.”

“That appeal to God is certainly adds a nice touch of subversion, just like the motto ‘In God we Trust’ added to *paper* currency in attempt to condone something which has no legal basis for the whole country. But I digress...

“Since the Civil War, it is true that members of Congress have taken an oath which gives an explicit reference to an ‘office’ before they take their legislative seats. But the oath members of Congress took for the first 74 years of government under the Constitution was the simple 14-word oath to ‘support’ the Constitution, in due conformity with Article VI, Clause 3.

Bare Liberty

“I assert that it is not mere coincidence that the post-1863 oath coincides with government acting in numerous ways never-before authorized.

“The best way to understand that this post-1863 oath is a problem is by looking at the last portion of Article I, Section 6, Clause 2 of the U.S. Constitution which mandates that ‘no Person holding any Office under the United States, shall be a Member of either House during his Continuance in Office’.

“This clause is among the primary teeth to implement the Republican Form of Government guaranteed every State in the Union by Article IV, Section 4. A representative form of government is that which the Declaration of Independence acknowledged was a right ‘inestimable’ to the people, and the British call for relinquishment of our inherent right of representation was ‘formidable to tyrants only’.

“The U.S. Constitution absolutely prohibits any person ‘holding any Office under the United States’ from ever being a Member of either House of Congress ‘during his Continuance in Office’.

“Therefore, the ‘office’ to which U.S. Senators and U.S. Representatives now pledge to ‘well and faithfully discharge’ absolutely cannot be ‘under the United States’, at least as how the term ‘the United States’ is understood by the Constitution, for if that phrase did have such meaning, then that office would absolutely preclude them from being legislative members, from exercising any legislative authority whatsoever.

“To the extent that legislative members take an oath ‘of office’ before they take their legislative seats is the degree to which members of Congress have been interfered with their proper constitutional duties, their primary duty being to ‘support the Constitution’, *the whole thing*.

“This contradiction explains a lot of things which have been going on for the last 150 years. Much more went on during the Civil War era than meets the eye. Government changed during and after the Civil War in more ways than Americans can scarcely imagine.

“Inconsistencies between government as authorized and government as practiced are the type of evidence which patriots must follow to ever begin understanding what is going on with our country. Understanding how and where our country got off course provides important clues on how to get the country back on course.

“There are a few legislative officers, such as Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, but those are legislative officers and not government officers, per se. For example, the President is to commission ‘all the officers of the United States’ under Article II, Section 3, but the President never commissions any Senator or Representative, again showing that members of Congress are not officers under the United States; that they are not officers of the United States.”

“I don’t think I’m able to mentally process any more of this information tonight,” admitted Alan. “I’m exhausted.”

“OK,” replied Mark. “But if you want to learn more on the oath, you can read the fifth issue of *The Beacon Spotlight* at the PatriotCorps.org website, which covers this topic in greater detail.”

Isabella spent the remainder of the evening attempting to be cute and cuddly, warm and fuzzy, giggling over things that weren’t really all that funny and placing her hand repeatedly on Mark’s shoulder when she wanted to get his attention, to ask him any question which would just be an excuse to touch him, because that was her job and that was what she was being paid rather handsomely to do.

Penny resolved that if a woman with the personality of a 16-year old flirtatious girl was going to ever be at a round table with them again, that they would sit boy-boy-girl-girl like children, so Penny would be the only girl beside her boy.

Bare Liberty

If Isabella knew any better, she would have not ever given Penny any reason to cast a watchful eye her direction in the first place.

After a few parting pleasantries were exchanged, the couples parted ways, with Mark and Penny thanking Alan and Isabella for dinner and their generosity.

After getting in their vehicle to drive home, Penny remarked, “I don’t want to seem ungrateful for dinner and especially their generous donation, but I don’t trust either Alan or Isabella farther than I could throw them, which I wouldn’t mind doing with her if I wouldn’t hurt myself.”

“I’m glad you came along tonight,” Mark stated. “I wanted to hear your impressions of Alan.”

“My impression is that I don’t want you hanging around with people who seem inherently dangerous, even if I can’t pin down a particular problem. And you won’t be meeting Isabella without me being present, just so we are clear,” Penny informed Mark.

“You mean at least if I wish to keep on living?” Mark asked, knowing full well the answer.

“Precisely,” answered Penny.

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Alan Johnson informed his bosses that things didn’t go as anticipated, again, even with or especially because their ace, Isabella, was there.

“And if anything, Mark Evanston was put on guard by a larger donation, if not offended,” Alan conceded. “I can’t figure him out.”

None of the clandestine group knew exactly what to make of Mark being seemingly indifferent or even ostensibly opposed to large donations to his pet cause which was so near and dear to his heart.

In the underworld, money talked and large amounts of it shouted. And none of these men or women *ever* refused to answer.

Perhaps it was Mark's business failures over the years, of pursuing business goals which he sought after and accomplished, only to fail financially in the end. Accomplishment of his own goals tragically never seemed to relate to financial success, or financial success would seem to come only at the cost of sacrificing his true goals.

Like when he was a chiropractor, at first he followed the crowd and gave customers what they said they wanted, acute-care treatment with third-party insurance coverage, because that is what was normal and because that is where the money for treatment seemed most readily-available.

But if his goal was to help improve patients' health and therefore their lives, then their care shouldn't end just because their insurance coverage was limited in attempt to keep health care costs down and insurance premiums affordable.

If the end-goal was adequate and affordable care for optimum health, then why use an intermediate means — third-party insurance coverage — which in many cases made the end all but impossible? Why not simply find a more direct means to achieve the proper ends?

And Mark didn't like the direction health insurance was headed.

Thus, after four years in business for himself within another chiropractor's office, he ventured out fully on his own, thereafter refusing third-party insurance coverage. He slashed his prices 50% and offered prompt service guarantees and extended hours, but he sat there figuratively twiddling his thumbs.

In time Mark saw that his initial fee-for-service business model stood in his way to achieving his goals, so he switched over to a flat monthly fee offering unlimited service, of \$40/individual per month, \$60/couple or \$80/family.

But Mark's marketing skills proved woefully inadequate.

Bare Liberty

As far as building a successful chiropractic practice was concerned, he was satisfied that he had met the objectives he could directly provide.

Mark's office had been located within a beautiful new office building centrally-located with easy access and adequate parking, well-furnished with custom-made chiropractic benches, chairs, desks, lockers and picture frames that he made himself of black walnut and exotic hardwoods including cocobolo, padauk, purpleheart, bubinga, and wenge, along with black leather for the upholstery.

He had a modern phone system, latest-model x-ray machine and automatic film processor. All of which sat essentially unused, while he often referred calls wanting third-party payment coverage to his fellow practitioners who practiced standardized care.

But in the end his idleness was not wasted, as he had already unknowingly began an unplanned quest to discover how and why things seemed upside-down in America.

Mark Evanston was soon forced by lack of sufficient income to either abandon his preferred type of chiropractic care he formulated after considerable planning and go back to standardized care hoping to make ends meet or quit chiropractic altogether.

His choice to work in his cousin's rock quarry running a front-end loader answered that question for the remainder of his life, even though he did not stay working in the quarry longer than a year.

Mark learned a great deal from his failures; far more than he ever learned from his successes. He learned that he was not Superman, nor invincible.

He learned that he was really a rather lousy businessman, for a good businessman sought to please his customers, giving them what they thought they wanted or being savvy enough to be able to show them why they should follow his lead.

Mark, however, proved wholly inadequate in convincing others of anything; he primarily sought to accomplish his own goals while he hopefully at least made wages for himself in the process.

But what Mark really learned was that his only real failure would be failing to be honest with himself, of following instead someone else's proven path for financial success rather than staying with his own path as long as he was humanly able and hoping for the best.

If his option was to please others and succeed financially while failing to accomplish his own goals or pursue his own goals but fail financially, he would end up choosing the latter every time.

In a showdown between following a proven path to financial success and following his heart, Mark proved time and again he was no pragmatist.

It wasn't as if Mark intentionally chose to be different, to necessarily choose the path seldom travelled, it was more as if Mark saw various paths lead to places he simply wasn't willing to travel and that he did not even think were wise. To him, the more distinguished the path, the more likely it lead in the wrong direction to the wrong destination.

Perhaps all the smaller failures in his life merely reinforced his character, building up his moral fiber so that he would not be easily discouraged when the true test for which he was born into this world was finally placed before him.

After all, what realist would ever consider, even for a moment, standing up to all of the federal government which stood opposed to the spirit of our beloved Constitution, all alone, if need be?

Mark was stubborn, as he heard time and again from Penny or others of his family, usually as a sign of derision. But each day that stubbornness was increasingly finding itself being manifested with a quiet acceptance of a prolonged struggle to achieve the seemingly impossible, to battle against all of government tyranny no matter the pitiful odds.

Through the quiet perseverance of all of his many failures, Mark was now ready, willing and able to stand before the modern-day government Goliath and tell him that even though he was the biggest, baddest giant on the block who could readily pummel Mark at will, and even though Mark had not even a slingshot to cast a single stone in offense, that Mark would nevertheless use the written and spoken word of truth as his only defense against the unjust tyrant who had for far too long prospered simply because no one bothered to learn the true source of the giant's devilish power and stand against him and shout 'NO MORE!'

Mark did not worry about the outcome of his struggle, for he understood that was well beyond his control. He had no financial resources whatsoever because of his past business failures; in fact he still owed large sums of money to his creditors. He seemingly had little going for him which could inspire others to follow his lead, and neither did he really know at all how to lead others.

Mark had almost nothing going for him which would provide a rational person with even a glimmer of a chance of thinking that he could ever succeed, but that still didn't give Mark a sufficient excuse not to do everything he could for as long as he was able, at least as far as his limited means would allow.

Neither did Mark have any idea whether he would be around to enjoy an inevitable victory or whether he would be pummeled into utter submission in the next battle.

Mark only knew that while he may be crushed under the steady progression of government overreach tomorrow, that today he had the strength and opportunity to wage another battle in the fight of Truth over Evil, so today was another good day to fight.

And to Mark, every day that he was able to fight was in and of itself another small victory.

For sure, the federal government during the same period of time won huge victories: Obamacare, for instance, was simply among the latest and greatest of successes of government overreach, new things which government was now doing which it wasn't doing only a few short years before.

But each new advance of government overreach actually brought omnipotent government one step closer to being too big to continue even functioning. Each new government action increased the likelihood that it would be the final straw to finally break the camel's back and send the country down to her knees.

"What are you doing?" Penny asked her husband who was sitting in the recliner looking her way but seemingly a million miles away.

"I'm sorry, I didn't hear you come in," Mark responded, coming out of what could almost be considered a waking coma, as he got up to give her a greeting kiss. "How long have you been home?"

"I just got here, but I called your phone 20 minutes ago and you didn't answer," Penny stated.

Looking at his cell phone beside his chair as he went to sit back down after greeting Penny, he saw that he had missed a call. "Oops," Mark answered, "I guess I didn't hear the phone."

"We're having chicken for dinner, if that is all-right," Penny said.

"Yes, that's fine," Mark responded. "Do you need me to do anything?"

"No, I'm perfectly capable of fixing dinner, but thanks for the offer which I'm sure you don't want me to take you up onaaa," Penny commented.

"Dinner should be ready in about 30 or 40 minutes, time enough for you to get lost back into your own little world," Penny offered, but Mark didn't hear anything beyond the estimated time for dinner, already becoming lost in thought.

Bare Liberty

Alan Johnson made several more attempts to contact Mark, but Mark turned down all further attempts to meet him outside of allowing Alan to walk through the neighborhoods with him going door-to-door.

Alan and Isabella relayed to their bosses their lack of progress, who relayed up the chain-of-command to Charles Cunningham who began setting alternative plans into motion. Alan was soon pulled off his undercover assignment, while Isabella herself for the first time in her career wasn't able to get under the covers with her assignment as she had been ordered.

Chapter Ten

Each passing week, new members came into the Patriot Corps fold, both nationally and the local Vancouver chapter.

Jamie Jeffers, an attractive and intelligent woman in her late 30's with a quiet demeanor, was one of the latest recruits.

And then there was Adam Ramsey, a recent college graduate, full of idealism and enthusiasm, even though in his early 30's he was years older than had been most of his classmates.

After high school, Adam told the story that he had first hiked his way across the country for several years, taking odd jobs as needed, typically in the service industry where he could use his ample charm to entice large tips from his curious customers who found his travelling experiences and enthusiastic personality quite entertaining.

Adam jumped feet-first into the Patriot Corps organization, whereas Jamie proceeded more cautiously.

Adam met Mark first, before Jamie, at a monthly strategy meeting to which Adam had already been invited. Mark found Adam to be passionate and street-smart, who kept close tabs on everything that went on around him, who would be the center of attention in any room he chose to enter.

Adam was a likeable young man who had a natural gift of being able to put others at ease and converse with them on a wide variety of topics. Mark knew that Adam would be one to watch, as surely he would be making a name for himself in the Patriot Corps organization within a matter of months.

As Mark made it home one particular evening, Penny greeted him at the door, as she always did. But today she seemed more anxious than normal, as if she had something important to tell him. After Mark got settled in, Penny spoke up, stating, "I spoke with Bethany today on the phone and it's final, she and Brad are getting a divorce."

“Oh, no; that’s too bad. I’m sorry to hear that,” Mark answered. “But perhaps it’s not to be unexpected given the difficulties they’ve been having lately. Is Bethany blaming me?”

“I don’t think so, but maybe Brad is,” Penny answered. “I know with them being separated for so many months while we were all in Wyoming was rough on them. It didn’t help that Brad had to find out he was going to be a father in a cryptic message and couldn’t even talk with his wife on the phone, let alone in person. And Brad missed all the pregnancy events such as the ultrasound to find out the sex of the baby. Of course, when Bethany and the kids finally made it home, almost immediately Brad became a new father and so it too was a steep re-adjustment period.

“Brad doesn’t want Bethany to leave the Tri-Cities, or I should clarify that Bethany could leave, but that Brad doesn’t want Jeremiah to live away from the Tri-Cities. He certainly doesn’t want Jeremiah moving to Vancouver.”

“It looks like they will both get their lawyers and fight it out in court, where only the lawyers prosper,” Penny offered.

“I hope they can get things worked out, hopefully sooner rather than later,” Mark said. “It is too bad Bethany has to go through this again, another divorce.”

“She said she wants to steer clear of men for a while, and just get settled and find a new routine, but who knows what her new life will bring,” Penny relayed.

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Summer was winding down, and Patriot Corps members throughout Washington were looking forward to attending a State-wide convention in Olympia the following Saturday, September 5th, 2015, Labor Day weekend.

Bare Liberty

The Vancouver group chartered a bus for the event. Mark and Penny were going, and even Bethany decided to come along, having recently been able to move back to Vancouver but having no kids for the extended weekend.

Many other members of the local Patriot Corps group were attending, including Adam Ramsey and Jamie Jeffers.

Mark, Penny and Bethany arrived at 7:30 a.m. to make sure they were among the first to arrive so they would be able to greet everyone who would be going along.

Adam was the next person to turn up and was pleasantly surprised to meet Bethany, to whom he made it a point to get introduced. Bethany and Adam were hitting it off pretty well from the start, and ended up sitting together in the front seat of the bus across from Jamie Jeffers, with Mark and Penny sitting behind them.

Another recent Patriot Corps member, Mike Holladay, sat beside Jamie in the front seat. Stan Bogelman, who had joined the Patriot Corps a week before Mike, was a little too slow getting on the bus to sit with Jamie as he had hoped. Seeing the seat already occupied, he sat behind them instead.

The bus left the parking lot a few minutes past 8:00 a.m. for the 10:00 a.m. meeting which would last until 4:00 pm. There would be hourly guest lectures, or the attendees could alternatively attend various breakout workshop sessions to polish their interpersonal skills, hone their research skills via computer or library, or learn formal speaking tips.

A few miles south of Chehalis on I-5, the bus entered a construction zone. It was lightly raining, but rather warm out. Visibility was fair, but rain water was beginning to accumulate in puddles and therefore spray up on windshields, making visibility worse.

As the bus entered a slight sideways shift in the freeway lanes, a car ahead of it in the fast lane got too close to the coned-off shoulder area and clipped one of the smaller safety cones and several of the large, orange safety barrels. One of the barrels which had been knocked on its side landed partially in the lane in front of the bus.

The bus driver hit the brakes and appeared to keep things under control, just as another car which had hurriedly passed them suddenly veered in front of the bus to avoid the other barrel in his lane. The bus driver did an excellent job keeping the bus safely oriented, especially considering the circumstances, but then the bus hit an uneven road section and lost traction, sliding into the guardrail and coming to an abrupt stop.

Passengers in the front of the bus suffered the most harm, including Adam and Bethany on one side and Jamie Jeffers and Mike Holladay on the other.

Bethany had a cut above her left eye which gushed out a small amount of blood. She had also hit her chest on the railing in front of her, and scraped up her left forearm.

Adam had a large bump on his head and was a little groggy.

Jamie had been knocked unconscious, but soon regained consciousness and complained of soreness around her temple.

Mike had a gash on his cheek, and blood oozed from his forearm.

Mark was ok, although he had a few sore muscles from bracing for impact. Penny was aching from being tossed around like a turnip, but ignored her condition as she tried to comfort Bethany and care for Jamie's wounds.

Many other passengers had various bumps and bruises, but no other serious injuries were reported. The driver complained of a sore neck, his seat belt having kept his body properly restrained but allowing the head to whipsaw forward and back.

Bare Liberty

The State Patrol arrived quickly, along with members of the local fire department who helped administer first aid and stop the flow of blood. Jamie was taken by ambulance to the local hospital, although she kept saying that she was OK and needn't go. The paramedics insisted however that anyone who lost consciousness should be examined further, to which Mark readily agreed.

Mark contacted the primary organizer of the Olympia meeting to let him know of their situation, and that he'd update their status as soon as they had a better idea what that would be.

The crash put the group an hour behind schedule and it would take at least another hour for another bus to get to them. Since they were also still nearly an hour away from their destination once they could begin moving again and since most of them were quite sore, the decision was made just to get another bus heading their direction to take them back to Vancouver.

Bethany and Adam stayed behind with the group and waited for the bus to arrive while Mark and Penny drove the rental car which had been delivered to them to the hospital to pick up Jamie and take them all home once she was released.

Mark and Penny dropped Jamie off at her apartment in Vancouver after an uneventful trip south and made sure she had what she needed. They got her phone number and gave her theirs, and told her they'd check with her the next day to make sure she was mending properly.

The Evanston's checked in on their other patient, Bethany. Adam had run to the store for Bethany to get a few first aid supplies and he came back after Mark and Penny had arrived.

Penny smiled at Mark, knowing Bethany enjoyed the male attention of another suitor who appeared well-suited for her.

Seeing Bethany was being sufficiently cared for, Mark and Penny headed back to the parking lot to pick up their vehicle and then drop off the rental car at a local yard.

It was 4:00 p.m. when they got home, the time the convention was just getting over. A few minutes later, Mark got a call from Olympia, saying everything there had gone well despite their absence.

Over the next week, Penny contacted Jamie Jeffers several times by phone and dropped off some soup and a few prepared dinners, since Jamie was alone and didn't have anyone caring for her. Jamie appreciated the concern, but felt a little guilty about so much attention being paid her.

Bethany and Adam began seeing each other casually, but he hadn't yet met Paige, Ryan or Jeremiah. Bethany insisted things move slowly as she didn't want to parade a bunch of men past her children who needed stability in their lives.

Paige and Ryan began a new school year, and were soon involved in many of the public school activities. Penny watched Jeremiah as often as she was able, when she wasn't doing the books for Patriot Corps or involved in any of its various activities.

Blake and Daphne Banning and their four boys were now well settled in their home at the outskirts of town after leaving Wyoming, with Daphne beginning another school year at home for the older kids of school age.

Penny was happy to have the whole family nearby again, and stayed involved with her grandchildren's many activities.

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Charles Cunningham began to grow impatient. Over eight months had passed since Mark Evanston had released *Patriot Quest* and four months had passed since Charles had returned to New York from the Cayman Islands, and yet Mark was no closer to humiliation and disgrace.

Charles knew that he could finish Mark off at any time, but it would only suit the revenge factor if it were done too early. While revenge was important on a personal level, the professional level took precedence and it mandated that Mark's work first be publicly discredited.

And since few people speak ill of the dead, posthumous humiliation wasn't an option. Mark's fall from grace necessarily had to occur while he was still alive.

Charles decided to fly to Portland and take a more personal hand in getting things moving. He arrived in the city on September 24th.

Adam Ramsey had an appointment with Charles for drinks at the hotel bar the very night Charles arrived.

"So, Adam, I've heard great things about you," Charles said, upon meeting the young man.

"Thank you," Adam replied to the boss he never figured he'd even know by name let alone be able to meet. "Likewise with you."

"So I hear reports that you have been seeing Mark Evanston's step-daughter," replied Charles. "That was an excellent choice of tactics. It gets you close to Evanston, on a personal level, even beyond the professional level."

"It has been a pleasure, for Bethany is a beautiful, vibrant gal and we have really hit it off together," offered Adam.

"That's not going to pose a problem for us, is it?" asked Charles.

"No, of course not." answered Adam. "I know on what side my bread is being buttered. I only meant I am a lucky guy, getting to enjoy my job and I will really work hard to pull everything off to your satisfaction."

"Ok, then. It is time to step up the game plan," stated Charles. "Here are some recreational drugs, not for you, but for you to begin slipping to Mark on a consistent basis. We want to see him starting to unravel. Are you up to it?"

“No problem,” replied Adam. “Between seeing Mark either at work or through Bethany, I should be able to get him hopped up in no time.”

“Ok, but go at it slow, we don’t want him catching on, at least until he’s hooked,” Charles detailed.

“Right. Slow and steady as she goes,” answered Adam.

Charles had an early breakfast the next morning with Jamie Jeffers. Charles began, “I heard that bus accident has been a blessing that keeps on giving.”

“Yes, ever since the bus accident, both Mark and Penny Evanston have paid a lot of attention to me,” Jamie replied. “I’m really in good graces with Penny, and she doesn’t suspect anything.”

“That is very important,” replied Charles. “We have to keep the wife happy and not suspecting anything is going on. That is very important; as everyone knows, if the wife isn’t happy, no one is happy.

“I have some prescription pain killers for you to start slipping Mark as often as you can, within reason, to get him hooked on them, unless Adam is successful first. Keep tabs with Adam, we don’t want to double things up and give it all away, at least until Evanston is hooked on one of them. But one of you two needs to be successful, soon.”

“I’m having lunch with Penny later this week; I’ll see what I can do,” Jamie answered.

Charles’ plans were starting to come together. Although his first strike force had struck out rather quickly, the second team seemed better-positioned to fulfill the task at hand and yet within a reasonable timetable.

For the coming weekend, Adam suggested to Bethany that they invite Mark and Penny to a Sunday morning brunch since the kids were visiting their respective fathers again.

The Sunday brunch at a local restaurant on the Columbia River offered a pleasurable experience and good food, while being able to view the various river recreation activities.

After being seated, the two couples went up to the buffet line and began filling their plates with food. It was a nice brunch; besides an omelet bar, there was a wide variety of fresh fruit, bacon, sausage links, ham, scrambled eggs, waffles, French toast, hash browns, oatmeal with the fixings, and even Mark's favorite, Eggs Benedict.

Adam was the first to get back to the table with his plate, so he went back up and got glasses of fresh-squeezed orange juice from the carafe at the end of the food line. He grabbed a small tray and loaded up four drinks, keeping one drink isolated from the others.

Adam nonchalantly opened up a two pill capsules and poured the interior contents of the capsules into the isolated cup, mixing in the powder with a spoon.

"I brought fresh-squeezed orange juice for everyone," Adam offered as he returned to the table with the drinks.

"Well, thank you, Adam," Penny replied as Adam set a glass in front of her and the next one in front of Bethany.

"No thanks, Adam," Mark replied, as Adam went to give Mark his intended drink. "Reluctantly, I'll pass."

"Oh, I figured you liked orange juice," Adam answered.

"I do, that's the problem," Mark offered, telling him the story how he used to make a pitcher of orange juice from frozen concentrate every morning for a decade. "Unless the kids drank some, I typically finished the whole pitcher myself with breakfast.

"It finally dawned on me one day that I was drinking something like 500 calories of orange juice in one sitting, so I quit drinking it thereafter as self-imposed punishment for over-indulging myself for so long," replied Mark.

“Really, so you won’t drink orange juice any more, even fresh-squeezed?” asked Adam.

“No, I’ll pass, even though I love it,” Mark answered.

“It’s OK, Adam. I’ll drink Mark’s glass; these glasses are so small, after all,” replied Penny, as she reached for the glass.

Adam knew he couldn’t let Penny drink the tainted juice, so he quickly reached out nominally to get the glass for her but ‘accidentally’ knocked it over, spilling the contents onto the table and into Mark’s lap.

“I’m sorry, Mark,” offered Adam. “I don’t know how I spilled the juice. Please forgive me.”

“No problem, accidents happen all the time,” Mark answered, grabbing his cloth napkin and wiping up the juice.

To Adam’s chagrin, the remainder of the brunch was uneventful; Adam figured he best not again tempt fate so soon after making one scene, marking defeat for his first attempt to drug Mark.

Adam contemplated other tactics of how he could spike Mark’s food or drink on a regular basis, without affecting other people who may eat the same foods or drink the same liquids.

It would be one thing if he needed to poison Mark only once; but he needed steady and consistent access.

Before they were ready to leave the restaurant, Penny gave Mark his medication he was to take with morning and evening meals.

“That’s it,” Adam said to himself as he realized that only Mark would take his medications, so if Adam could spike a whole bottle of pills, Mark would ingest them incrementally himself over time. Adam wouldn’t have to continuously expose himself to get Mark hooked.

Adam knew now that he needed to be invited over to the Evanston household so he could get a sample of Mark's pills to duplicate.

The waitress dropped off the two check holders for the two couples' meals, but Adam grabbed both of them before either Mark or Penny could even flinch.

"We'll get our own bill," Mark stated, as he reached over to grab the ticket stub out of Adam's hand.

"No, I want to apologize for spilling the orange juice on you. You shouldn't have to pay for the meal which ended up in your lap," Adam answered, as he pulled back the tickets out of Mark's reach.

Mark conceded, knowing that Adam felt bad about spilling orange juice in Mark's lap.

Adam laid low with his plans during the week, not wanting to appear too anxious to visit Mark and Penny at home where he could do a little investigative fieldwork to discover Mark's medications.

Adam was relieved when Bethany told him that Penny had invited them over for lunch a week from Sunday, to thank them for the fine meal Adam had bought them. Adam quickly accepted, even though Bethany didn't really want to go. But Bethany and Adam typically went out every other weekend when the kids were away, so the timing was acceptable.

Penny would have rather had the grandkids over also, but Bethany was still keeping them from being around Adam yet until she was more comfortable knowing that he would be around for a while.

Penny readied the steaks and chicken for the barbeque and had the rest of the meal ready to go when Sunday afternoon arrived.

"Mark," Penny began, "you can put the meat on the barbeque any time you're ready."

"Ok, will do," he answered.

While Mark went out to the patio with the meat and while Bethany went to the bathroom and as Penny reached into the fridge to get various condiments, Adam found his opportunity to grab Mark's pills out of the antique pie safe where he had earlier spotted them.

Adam pulled out the tallest pill bottle and removed the lid. Being careful not to rattle the pills, he grabbed one of them and slipped it into his pocket. He replaced the lid and put the bottle back where he found it, noting that the medication was Metformin, 500 milligrams.

As Mark took his pills at dinner, Adam asked what they were if it wasn't being too nosy.

"Oh, it's no big deal," Mark replied. "I take some medication for my diabetes, and a low dosage blood pressure pill for some kidney protection."

The couples talked for a half-hour after eating before Bethany stated that it was time for Adam and her to leave, to enjoy a little bit of 'alone time' before the kids would be coming back home.

"No problem, I understand," responded Penny. "Thanks for coming; we had an enjoyable visit."

With Adam's primary purpose for the meal completed, he was happy to get out of the house and spend the rest of the afternoon alone with Bethany.

After he later left Bethany's, Adam took Mark's pill to a local, back-yard, black market 'pharmacist' who would add a transparent liquid coating to a new bottle of pills to spice them up.

Chapter Eleven

Adam picked up Mark's replacement pills from the back-street pharmacist, the pills with an ever-so-slight added tincture of heroin.

With a little ingenuity, Adam was able to get Mark's doctored medication substituted in his old pill bottle later in the week without getting caught.

Since Adam had been able to switch Mark's medication, it alleviated the need for Jamie Jeffers to fulfill her similar marching orders. She was ordered to proceed along her next task, getting close enough to Mark to get him into a few embarrassing photo ops, which Adam's task was meant to help induce.

Jamie had been getting closer to Mark ever-so-slowly. Her progress increased after she used her new connections to Mark and Penny after the bus incident, as she began to volunteer part-time at the Patriot Corps office.

Jamie quickly proved herself such that at the time when a paid office position opened up, it made perfect sense to hire Jamie, since she was already readily familiar with the office procedures.

With Jamie now at the office full-time, she stepped up her game and began working to carefully seduce Mark. She began wearing lower-cut blouses, but none so extreme such that they would alarm Penny, who came by the office far too often to dare risk raising her ire.

Jamie came into Mark's office as often as she able, to ask his opinion on any matters she dare ask or to get further instruction on any new activities she was assigned.

She would stand closer to Mark than was necessary, brush up against him when she could, stoop over any papers she would lay on his desk to better reveal her ample cleavage, or brush back a wisp of her hair with her hand and giggle playfully as if she were much younger than she actually was.

But Jamie miscalculated when it came to Mark, thinking he was prone to recognize her subtle overtures. It wasn't that Mark was indifferent to female influence, it was simply that he had not a subtlety-detecting bone in his body. It would take a ton of bricks to fall for him to notice matters which are patently obvious to most members of the human race.

When it came to interpersonal communication, it is said by competent communicators that up to 90% of all communication transpires through non-verbal body language.

Obviously these professional communicators had never met Mark, in whom most subtle cues of communication went virtually unnoticed.

Professional communicators assert that body language relays much about how one cares and how well one listens; concerns both too often found missing with Mark.

This inherent character flaw was probably the primary reason Mark's chiropractic practice failed to attract a sufficient number of patients to stay in business and why Mark had difficulty relating to people with his Patriot Corps work.

It wasn't that Mark was uncaring, far from it; it was simply that the things he cared about differed from most people, and that the problems which he sought to understand were so great they consumed a significant amount of his attention such that little else could ever hit his radar.

It was also for this reason that Mark and Penny had developed extensive marital problems early in their marriage, so much so that they eventually divorced.

Divorce was one of those 'ton of bricks' which fell on Mark which eventually got his attention. The divorce later caused him to re-examine his tactics, to try and learn how to pursue his future chosen course without wholly ignoring the present.

In time, slowly, through a great deal of agony, Mark began to re-prioritize his goals and was able to eventually woo Penny back such that he would eventually find himself again in her good graces, eventually getting re-married in Hawaii.

Marriage between Mark and Penny was a rocky and trying road, but after a decade of ups and downs since they first met, they finally found a way for each of them to find personal fulfillment together, or at least Penny seemed to find sufficient fulfillment such that she didn't ever throw Mark out of the house again.

Penny's activities centered on family; being wife, mother, and grand-mother, and not necessarily in that order.

Mark kept family somewhere loosely in the top-10 list, at least most of the time. Sometimes it even came near the top, especially after Penny would help Mark to re-prioritize on occasion.

Like Penny had initially thought, Jamie also thought she was making significant progress with Mark. Jamie recognized Mark did not react as readily as had her past assignments, but she viewed her latest assignment as a challenge worthy of her skilled attention.

As was his routine, Mark refilled his weekly pill dispenser Sunday morning and took his morning pills. It didn't take too long before he was feeling rather odd.

His mouth was drier than it was normally, but considering he was diabetic, this wasn't necessarily all that unusual. He was sleepy and seemed off his game. His skin was starting to itch and his stomach began to turn; it felt maybe like he would vomit, which was unusual as Mark typically had an iron gut, at least when he kept any foods which could get there well-monitored.

"I don't think I'm up for going to church this morning," Mark offered. "I guess we should have gone last night like we usually do,"

"What's wrong?" asked Penny.

"I don't know, ever since breakfast I feel 'off'," Mark replied.

“Your eyes look more constricted than usual,” Penny commented. “It’s not that bright in here. You also look a little flush. I ate the same thing as you and feel fine, so I don’t think it was my cooking.”

“You’re not trying to poison me, are you dear?” Mark joked, trying to lighten the mood.

“If I was, you’d already be dead,” Penny responded with a laugh.

“I think I will lie down and take a short nap, and see if it will pass,” Mark offered.

As the morning wore on, and with a nap, Mark was beginning to feel better. He ate a light meal at lunch, which seemed to help. At dinner, he had a lighter meal to again ease his concerns that his problems were perhaps related to food or indigestion; but he ate enough food so he could take his evening pills.

After dinner his symptoms flared up, and this time he felt even worse.

“I feel sick again” Mark replied. “I’m going to go to bed early tonight and see if I can shake off whatever I seemed to have caught.”

Mark had a restless night. By morning Mark was doing better, but he was worried about eating, since as far as he could tell his problems were food-related.

“I forget, is it ‘feed a fever, starve a cold’ or the other way around?” Mark asked.

“No, it’s ‘feed a cold, starve a fever,’” Penny responded.

“Well, I have felt both a little cold and a little warm at differing times, but I think I will go with starving, for now. I’m going to pass on eating, at least until for the time being,” Mark said.

“You shouldn’t take your pills on an empty stomach; are you sure you shouldn’t eat a little something?” Penny asked.

"You're right, I shouldn't take the pills if I don't eat, so I'll just pass on the pills this morning also," Mark stated.

"Well, make sure you monitor yourself," Penny offered. "Don't let your blood sugar go too low."

"How about sending some bland food and maybe some fruit with me in case my blood sugar does drop significantly?" Mark asked.

"Will do," Penny replied.

As the morning wore on, Mark felt like he was getting back to normal. He thought it would be best to keep his distance from people in case he was contagious with anything, so he mostly stayed away from people as he tried to get some things done which had been accumulating on the back burner. But he wasn't having much success concentrating on anything and he soon called it an early night. By dinner time he was feeling better.

"What's for dinner?" asked Mark. "I could eat a horse."

"Pork chops," responded Penny.

"Great," Mark answered, busying himself in his office until Penny called him for dinner, after which he immediately began feeling bad again.

"I don't know what is wrong with me," Mark commented. "I don't feel very good, at all, again."

"Maybe you somehow got the wrong medicine," Penny suggested. "You refilled your weekly pill box yesterday morning and since then you have felt odd when you ate, or, perhaps more precisely, whenever you took your pills. I don't think it is a coincidence."

"My last new bottle of pills from the pharmacist was three weeks ago, so I would have expected having issues long before now if my pills were the problem," Mark said. "But I've got to say now that you mention it, my symptoms did appear with my Sunday morning meal."

“And the food I’ve eaten since then has been all over the board, but the symptoms are persistent. I thought it was the food, but lunch yesterday didn’t bother me at all, but I don’t take any pills with lunch.

“I don’t know, but as far as I can tell these look like the same pills as I’ve been taking,” Mark commented as he inspected the pills from his bottles. “We don’t have any of my old pills from earlier prescriptions lying around, do we?”

“No, all you have is right there in your pill bottles and your weekly container,” Penny answered.

“Well, I’m not taking them any more until I get them checked out, or get new prescriptions after talking with the pharmacist,” Mark said.

“Heroin,” the pharmacist stated later in the week after getting back the results from their lab. “Your Metformin pills were tainted with heroin.”

“What? Are you serious, I ingested *heroin*?” Mark asked, in disbelief. “Will that affect me for long? I took three pills; one morning and night on Sunday, and another one Monday night.”

“Well, you ingested the heroin orally, so your gastric juices attacked it first in your stomach and then your liver broke it down even further before it got dispersed into your blood stream for sending out throughout your body,” the pharmacist relayed. “That is so much better than it getting straight into your blood stream. But it still wouldn’t take long to get you addicted to it, so powerful is heroin.”

“With strict protocols here and the factory, there is no way any substance could have gotten on your pills, let alone heroin; intermixture had to happen after the pills were picked up from us,” the pharmacist continued. “I’ve contacted the Food and Drug Administration and the Drug Enforcement Agency; they will be following up with you to try and find the source.

“You’ve been poisoned, intentionally, as far as I can tell. I wouldn’t take this lightly, if it were me.”

Mark went home and told Penny the results. Mark and Penny recollected the past three weeks since Penny picked up the prescription at the pharmacist. “I picked up the pills as the last stop of the day, so the bottle came straight home with me,” Penny commented.

“Since I didn’t get sick until this past Sunday, someone likely replaced my pills some point between a week ago Sunday and last Saturday night, since the first pills from the new bottles which I took before last week never affected me.

“And for someone to know which pills I took so they could switch them with identical-looking pills, they’d have to be monitoring us for at least a little bit,” Mark volunteered.

“Alright, now I’m worried,” Penny stated. “Who could do something so awful, and why?”

“Who has had access?” Mark asked. “You haven’t even been out of the house much, have you?”

“Not much,” Penny replied. “Last week I was out of the house only two or three of the days for several hours each time. Other than that, I was home.”

“I guess someone could have broken in during the night, when we were both asleep,” Mark offered.

“While a tank could rumble through the house and you wouldn’t hear it, I hear everything,” Penny stated. “I really don’t think someone could be that quiet that I wouldn’t hear them, especially at night. I think that’s when I hear the faintest noises most clearly, even or especially when I’m sleeping, leftover effects from raising my babies.”

“Well, to start with, who’s been here at the house since the Sunday before last; who could have switched out my pills so that once I refilled my weekly dispenser I would ingest the poison?” Mark asked.

“Just us, Bethany and Adam...” Penny stated, as she trailed off at the mention of Adam’s name.

“You don’t think it could be Adam, do you?” Penny asked.

“I don’t think so, but I guess we don’t really know all that much about him,” Mark stated. “Adam did ask about my pills at the restaurant, after he had spilled my orange juice you were going to drink.”

“You don’t think that orange-juice of yours I was offering to drink was tainted with drugs, do you, and that Adam intentionally knocked it over before I could drink it?” asked Penny.

“Well, that would make perfect sense, now that you mention it,” replied Mark. “I guess we should be thankful that he didn’t want to poison you with those drugs also, if that was actually the case.”

“That’s still so scary,” said Penny. “I’m calling Bethany right now. I have to tell her our concerns.”

“First make sure Adam is not there,” Mark replied. “We don’t know what he’d do if he was the one who planted the drugs and was caught while he was with Bethany; we can’t endanger her.

“Actually, I don’t know if you’ll be able to calmly talk to Bethany if Adam is there, without her being able to tell something is up and pressuring you to spill the beans to her immediately, in front of Adam, so you better let me call her.”

“You’re right,” Penny admitted. “At least this is a school night, so it is unlikely that he will be over there with the kids being home. Let me talk to her once you find out he’s not there.”

“OK,” Mark said, calling Bethany’s cell phone.

“What do I owe the honor, Gramps?” Bethany asked, seeing his phone number on her phone, “Everything is alright isn’t it?”

“Everything is fine, at least relatively speaking,” Mark began. “But I was looking for Adam, he’s not there by chance, or coming over later tonight, is he?”

“No, I’m just getting the kids ready for bed,” Bethany said. “I won’t be seeing him again until next Friday, after I drop off the kids.”

“Your mother and I have some concerns about Adam, but we don’t know yet if they are true. On the off-chance they are true, you shouldn’t see him again until we find out; he could be very dangerous,” Mark said, sternly.

“You’re not kidding, are you?” Bethany asked, hearing the serious tone in Mark’s voice.

“No, I’ve been poisoned; someone likely last week laced my diabetes prescription with heroin. No one besides us, you and Adam have been in our house over that time, to our knowledge. It is possible that someone else snuck in without us knowing, but we feel it is imperative to keep out a watchful eye. Your mother wants to talk with you now.”

Penny and Bethany talked for another 10 minutes before Bethany said she would call back after she put the kids down for bed.

Bethany called back 20 minutes later, but then there was a knock at Mark and Penny’s door.

“Hello, are you Mark Evanston?” asked the gentleman, who identified himself as D.E.A. Agent Tim Gilbert.

“Yes, I’m Mark Evanston,” Mark replied. “Won’t you please come in? I didn’t know when to expect you, but I’m surprised you’re here so late.”

“Thank you,” replied Agent Gilbert to the invitation. “And this is my partner, Agent Elizabeth Hogan. We’re still within normal hours which we will call on people.”

Hearing the officers at the door, Penny told Bethany she’d call her back once they left. She hung up the phone and Mark introduced her to the agents and them to her.

“We’ve been thrown for a loop,” Mark offered the agents, “since finding out that I’ve been poisoned. It is somewhat disheartening to learn I may again be a target.”

“Again?” asked Agent Gilbert.

“Yes,” Mark replied, as he began relaying his 2012 abduction and eventual release, along with a rough outline of the content of his work which seemed to be the source of his opponent’s intent to do him harm.

“You know,” Mark admitted, “this episode brings back to light a lecture by my Differential Diagnosis professor while I was in chiropractic college. I remember him telling us students that the signs and symptoms of recreational drug use, if you remove the knowledge from the drug user that it is supposed to be an enjoyable experience, are bad enough that the user would typically go and see a doctor.

“I guess my experience just proved the truth of that lecture. Since I did not knowingly ingest an altered drug and anticipate such reactions, the reactions I experienced were sufficiently unpleasant enough for me to seek help. I can’t imagine anyone willingly taking recreational drugs — poison as far as I’m concerned — and then paying high market prices for them on top of everything else.”

“Some people believe they need the escape recreational drugs seem to provide, for whatever reason,” Agent Gilbert responded. “I’ve never understood it, myself.”

Agents Gilbert and Hogan questioned Mark and Penny for over an hour, taking their statements. The agents listened intently to Mark and Penny's suspicions that Adam Ramsey had planted the tainted pills, admitting they knew of no one else who had been in their house besides family.

"But I want you to realize that it may not be Adam; he seems to be a good young man with a bright future, maybe someone else switched my pills and we didn't know they were even here," Mark offered as the agents were leaving.

"So, it looks like we get to go through you being a target all over again," Penny commented once they were alone. "What does that mean for us?"

"I don't know," Mark answered. "Trying to get me hooked on a highly addictive drug sounds like someone wants to see me dragged down into the gutter, supposedly of my own accord. This person or these people who wish me harm may not be overtly violent. If it was Adam and he had spiked the orange juice, it is a good sign that he wasn't willing to let you drink it."

"That isn't really all that comforting, if you think about it," Penny replied. "Unfortunately, as you phrased it isn't necessarily how Adam would have viewed it. He just wouldn't have wanted to possibly blow his cover with poisoning me so he could still poison you. That's a far cry from necessarily worrying about causing me harm."

"Good point, you're probably right," Mark responded. "But either way, we definitely need to be paying attention again on what's going on around us."

"I don't know if I can go through this all over again," Penny admitted, as she began crying lightly.

"I'm sorry, Dear," Mark said.

“You’re sorry for what?” Penny asked. “That people want to harm you, again? But you’re not really sorry because you keep doing the same things which evidently give these people ample reason to want to harm you.”

“I don’t know if that’s fair,” Mark stated. “I feel compelled to do what I have to do.”

“Precisely,” Penny replied. “My point exactly. You’re going to do what you want to do, no matter what it does to you, me, and everyone else around you, perhaps even Blake, Bethany and our grandkids. You’re making decisions that may well affect all of us.”

“So, do you want to take the family back to Wyoming or somewhere else?” Mark questioned Penny.

“Would you be coming?” Penny asked.

“I don’t think so,” Mark responded. “At least not at first.”

“I’m not sure what to think,” Penny answered as she again began to cry even harder. “I better call Bethany back and let her know what’s going on, since she seems to be smack-dab in the middle of the hornet’s nest this time.”

Penny and Bethany talked for 20 minutes; Bethany was feeling dazed, as if she had been hit by a freight train. She wasn’t ready to convict Adam, but she had to admit that he was the most likely suspect.

The Evanston’s had a restless night as they came to accept that someone wanted to cause Mark harm.

Agent Gilbert contacted Mark by phone later that next day, relaying that Adam Ramsey had apparently skipped town; that he left all his belongings but vanished before they could question him. The agent also said that Mark’s fingerprints were the only prints found on his pill bottle, indicating that someone must have wiped the bottle clean between the time Penny had brought them home from the pharmacist and Mark had last filled his weekly dispenser.

Since Adam had the opportunity and that he apparently fled to avoid being questioned, he was looking like the guilty party.

Mark told Penny the news and Penny relayed it to Bethany, who didn't take it well. She had been trying to be extra careful with men and now she realized that she had been played the worst she'd ever been. "You have to realize that Adam snookered us first," Penny told Bethany to ease her concerns that she wasn't proving to be such a good judge of character.

But Bethany found little comfort in her mother's words even though they were true; her trust had been violated and she began questioning her own judgment now more than ever. "Aren't there any honest men left in this world?" Bethany thought to herself. She was only comforted that it didn't take any longer to find out than it did, that her kids hadn't been yet exposed to Adam, and that Adam wasn't successful with his true plans to cause Mark lasting harm.

Mark informed Peter about his latest experience, letting him know that since Mark was an apparent target, that perhaps Peter and Janet were also. Peter agreed, saying they needed to let Steve and Randy know and that new strategies needed to be developed to address the increased threat level, threats which had been forecast several months earlier.

Mark and Penny flew back to Washington, D.C. a few days later for the meeting about implementing new safety procedures, although Penny would have felt a whole lot safer simply by not flying. But if Mark was leaving town, she wasn't particularly feeling inclined to stay behind.

Steve began the meeting by discussing the intentional drugging of Mark and the apparent infiltration into the Patriot Corps membership of a planted mole. He pointed out that clandestine activities are often like a virus, if one mole is detected there are perhaps many more. Thus detection of one necessarily warrants an appropriately-intense response as if there were many.

Randy spoke next, telling his listeners that vigilance is imperative and that safety protocols must be increased to the next level of intensity. Just as the most vulnerable animal which is furthest away from the safety of the herd gets picked off first, Randy stated that Patriot Corps members should realize that they shouldn't try and go anywhere alone.

Redundancy was important, but it was also expensive, Randy pointed out. The Patriot Corps needed to realize that besides being expensive on its own accord, increased security measures also slow down productivity, therefore being doubly expensive in the end.

After Randy wrapped up the safety portion of the meeting, Peter took over and discussed how an increased security budget would affect their current and planned projects.

Mark, Peter and Janet had several other discussions before Mark and Penny flew back home the next day.

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Charles Cunningham was quite disappointed that Mark Evanston's drugging was discovered before Mark became addicted. The discovery of the plot in the first phase made the next phases impractical to continue, at least as originally planned.

Charles had wanted Mark's family members and closest friends to witness for themselves Mark's increasingly-erratic behavior, and then get pictures of him in compromising situations to embarrass Mark and his family members, but with Mark now being put on alert, the current plans wouldn't likely still work.

It was nonetheless critical to discredit Mark Evanston, so Charles began leaning toward absolute falsification with planted evidence. Such a course of action would work adequately for their needs even if those closest to Mark would realize that it was all fabricated.

The evidence simply needed to be sufficiently-convincing with credible eye-witness accounts and at least the outward appearance of objectivity to be able to convince a jury and the general public of Mark's guilt, even if it wouldn't convince those closest to him.

Charles contacted Gerry Simmons, an old acquaintance with a background in the Hollywood special effects community who served five years in prison along with several studio executives for running a high-dollar cocaine and call-girl ring, which was how and where Jamie Jeffers had originally come to Charles' service — through Gerry's recommendation.

Charles gave Gerry a photograph of Mark Evanston along with his contact information, together with a mandate to thoroughly discredit Mark. Charles told Gerry he now had full control of the project to do whatever needed to be done, and to use Jamie as he saw fit.

Gerry set to work immediately, contacting Jamie and a few other colleagues who knew how to keep their mouths shut for an appropriate amount of money, money which would be quite plentiful as long as the proper result was accomplished. Gerry sought to create masterful illusions intended to convince a jury of Mark's guilt, and Jamie Jeffers was cast in the lead role.

Gerry began photographing Mark Evanston through a zoom lens to track his routine, learning his activities, associates, and normal timelines.

As anyone involved with Hollywood knows, stand-ins and stunt doubles are used to avoid placing actors in dangerous or uncomfortable situations or when great skill is required, and rarely does the audience ever realize the switch on camera.

In Gerry's upcoming production, Mark Evanston was the star who needed a convincing stand-in to make the intended audience believe that Mark should be unanimously 'awarded' his appropriate acting 'honor', preferably without the possibility of parole.

Gerry's first order of business was to find a convincing double for Mark, who, at least with the help of some Hollywood magic, could be transformed on film into Mark.

In this case, the double needn't necessarily realize that he was actually a stand-in, at least before it was too late.

For the steamy sex scenes which were scheduled to be photographed first, the action would take place in a distant California location of a national hotel chain which also had a facility in Vancouver which had been built at the same time, the rooms thus being identically laid out and furnished.

Photographing the critical scenes first and in another city was seen as an important safety factor to isolate the extraneous crew from the local hotel, giving them the freedom to concentrate on the work at hand without overly worrying about exposing the production if something unforeseen happened during the critical photography period. And, importantly, having the sex pictures taken elsewhere would hinder any post-event investigation in Vancouver from discovering the real story.

Besides, the remote location was more convenient for the photographer and actor, while it offered the actress a nice vacation.

Jamie Jeffers told her co-workers that she was going on a vacation for a week; she figured they didn't really need to know that it would be a working vacation.

Jamie played the lead role of the seductress as a polished professional and was always provocatively exposed in the photographs such that all eyes would be concentrated on her, or at least all male eyes. Mark's stand-in, in contrast, was always cast in harsh light, from the back or side, without any direct facial shots ever.

Mark's double had first received an appropriate haircut, with his hair dyed a silver-ish gray and appropriately thinned on top. He added what weight he could for the photographs and wore a plain gold wedding band.

Mark's double wore clothes identical to Mark's, and similar shoes and coat, at least for the scenes which contained clothing.

For those who would seldom think of such things, it would be surprising to most people to realize how much can be done to make someone look like someone else with a little know-how, sufficient time, ample money, and appropriate motivation.

With the bedroom scenes finished, production work shifted to the Vancouver hotel room which only purpose was to establish that Jamie and 'Mark' had frequented the hotel together over many weeks.

Jamie made twice-weekly visits to the hotel at lunch or early evening for three weeks, making sure to coordinate the hotel visits when Mark was away from the office, to minimize the number of witnesses who could possibly give Mark an alibi.

The leading actress sought to be noticed by hotel staff without being too obvious that she wanted to remain memorable.

She always paid for the room in cash, but checked in under her real name and identification. Mark's double wore a ball-cap, sunglasses, and a coat with a high collar, keeping his glance downward while entering or leaving the hotel. Mark's double would be the last to arrive at the hotel and the first to leave.

Since photography of the bedroom scenes were already completed, Jamie and Mark's double spent the hour in the hotel room on the first visit quietly watching television, without any others of the production staff present with them. The cameraman was out in the parking lot, getting a few shots of the subjects going into or coming out of the hotel.

Before they left the local hotel room that first visit, Mark's double casually suggested to Jamie that they could participate in the activities which were supposedly taking place in the hotel room, to help ensure realism if only for the cleaning staff or next-door guests. These were the words of a sincere actor wishing to practice his craft, of course, but Jamie cast him a glance that he best not press his luck and informed him that he got all the action he was going to get down in California.

But her partner's words caused Jamie to reconsider before their next rendezvous; Jamie realized that her colleague had a point about needing to make a convincing show for the hotel staff, that they were probably well-aware of what would be proper evidence of a little bit of hanky-panky going on. Besides, working undercover and not being able to freely date as she normally did, she hadn't been getting as much close male companionship as she was normally accustomed to.

Thereafter Jamie and Mark's stand-in gave the hotel cleaning staff ample evidence of wild goings-on in the hotel room.

When all the primary production work was done, Mark's double went back to Southern California to celebrate completion of his most-recent gig and to collect his final paycheck.

The next assignment for Jamie and her photographer was to get 'real' pictures of her and Mark in a restaurant. It wouldn't necessarily even matter if others were at the restaurant with them, if that was the only way to also get Mark there, for the photographs could easily be framed or cropped to show just the two of them together. It would only be imperative that Jamie sit next to Mark and be as friendly to him as he permitted.

Actually, with more people seated at a round table, the chairs would be closer to one another, allowing for a shot which could appear more romantic than it really was, especially if Jamie appropriately played her part at the proper time.

Jamie got her shot later that week, when she suggested to Mark and a few others to grab a bite after work. Although Mark hadn't realized it, earlier in the day Jamie had spoken with several others and invited them along, stating she had wanted to throw Mark a little surprise celebratory meeting, and "the more, the merrier."

With a small group of people all pleading for Mark to go along, he felt obliged to make a showing, but he informed them he would only be able to stay for a few minutes; Jamie replied that a few minutes was all she was asking for.

Jamie, as the coordinator of the late-afternoon celebration, was able to sit next to Mark at the restaurant. With the photographer out of eyeshot but in direct line of sight, Jamie pulled a small, wrapped present from her purse and, leaning in with one hand on Mark's shoulder, presented him with the gift and gave him a kiss on the cheek.

The kiss startled Mark, whose eyes must have got as big as two silver dollars, for several others at the table started laughing. Mark didn't know exactly what to say other than to thank her for the box, which was a nice pen and pencil set, engraved with his name.

Jamie spoke up and quickly offered to Mark, "That wasn't a romantic kiss, but a 'thank you' kiss for all you do to help restore our American republic. I just wanted you to know that you are greatly appreciated; I just hope I didn't embarrass you too much."

"Well you definitely startled me," Mark replied, as his face was returning to its normal shade of color after momentarily turning several darker shades of pink. "In the future, a pat on the back would be just fine."

"Understood," Jamie offered. "It won't happen again."

Mark excused himself for the remainder of the evening, saying that his wife would have dinner waiting for him and again thanked the group for the nice gift.

“Look what Jamie and a few others at the office gave me,” Mark said to his wife upon arriving at home. “It’s an engraved pen and pencil set.”

“That’s nice, when did you get it?” asked Penny.

“Today, after work, six of us went to Clancy’s for a few minutes,” Mark answered.

“Did you already eat?” asked Penny, as she was getting ready to serve dinner.

“No, I didn’t,” Mark replied.

“You should have,” Penny said. “It’s not like dinner here will be all that fantastic, you know.”

“Don’t sell yourself short,” Mark replied. “Dinner here looks great, but it is the company that is fantastic,” answered Mark, who was maybe learning a thing or two about properly responding to his wife, after all.

“I just went for a few minutes because they all really seemed to want me to go for some reason, which I think was for me to accept the gift. Try and not get mad, but when Jamie gave me the gift, she kissed me on the cheek before I realized what she was doing to stop it.”

“She what?” Penny asked, shocked at what she thought she heard. “She kissed you? Why?”

“I’m not sure,” replied Mark. “I thought it was rather peculiar, actually, but she acted like it was no big deal and said it was not a romantic kiss. Still, her kiss seemed out of character, especially in front of other Patriot Corps’ members.”

“I’ll be having a talk with Miss Jeffers the next time I see her,” replied a stern Penny, none too happy. She didn’t like it one bit when women hugged her husband, but kissing definitely crossed the line, no matter how supposedly benign.

Mark and Penny ate dinner and relaxed in the living room before Mark took his gift to his office and placed it in a drawer.

Jamie Jeffers' final assignment that dealt directly with Mark was to 'accidentally' scratch him at the appropriate hour and day, to get some of Mark's skin under her fingernails.

The 'appropriate' day for the scratching was scheduled for Tuesday, December 15, 2015. The scratch should come as late in the day while still ensuring it would necessarily happen that day.

Mark was scheduled to go that night to Stan Bogelman's house, to meet up also with Mike Holladay, to go over some planned Patriot Corps' activities. It was common knowledge around the Patriot Corps office that Mike and Stan, along with Jamie, had been spending more time with one another after being tossed around in the bus accident together, as the shared experience understandably drove them closer together.

What no one at the Patriot Corps knew, however, was that their shared histories started long before.

At 4:00 p.m., Mark began gathering up his belongings to run home and grab an early dinner before going over to Stan's for an hour.

Jamie had been carefully monitoring Mark and saw her cue, and got up out of her chair and walked over to his office and knocked on the door, asking "May I come in?"

"As long as you don't try and kiss me again," Mark replied with a smile on his face and short laugh, trying to lighten the response which he nevertheless felt compelled to convey.

"I wanted to apologize again for that," Jamie offered. "I think the kiss didn't go over here as it would have in my hometown. My family was always hugging and kissing and showing lots of affection even to relative strangers; I sometimes forget that different areas of the country have different customs."

“I’ve never heard you talk of family before,” Mark replied. “Where is your hometown?”

Brushing off the question, Jamie instead raised her hand that had been by her side, showing a stack of papers as she walked toward Mark. “I had a question about last month’s expenses and I was hoping you could clarify things for me.”

As Jamie neared Mark, however, she stumbled forward, reflexively throwing her hands out in front of her to catch her fall, letting go of the papers.

Mark instinctively reached out to help keep Jamie from falling, and he was successful, but he nevertheless suffered some deep scratches on the back of his hand while the papers ended up on the floor.

“Are you OK?” asked Mark, helping Jamie regain her footing and stand on her own two feet.

“Yes, I’m fine; just embarrassed,” Jamie responded. “But what about you? Look, you’re bleeding; I’m sorry, I must have scratched you.”

“No problem, a little blood won’t kill me,” Mark replied, not knowing then that a little blood and skin tissue would nevertheless easily incriminate him.

“Let me clean that up,” Jamie offered, heading toward the office bathroom. “I’ll go get some alcohol wipes and some bandages.”

Jamie helped clean up Mark’s wounds and bandaged them up, being very careful not to clean under her own fingernails in the process, while making sure to get a little bit of his blood on her shirt sleeve.

“I need to get going, Jamie; I’m running a little late. Your question can wait until tomorrow.” Mark stated as he gathered up his things.

“Yes, no problem. I’m sorry for scratching you. I hope you have a better night.” Jamie offered, knowing full well that Mark’s night would be the first of many nights for quite some time that would be anything but good.

After Mark left the office, Jamie went back into his office and grabbed his trash bag, the garbage bag which contained the bandage and alcohol wipe wrappers and used wipes. She wrapped up the plastic bag and placed it in her tote bag and later dropped it off in a garbage can at the gas station when she fueled her car.

When Mark got home, Penny saw that the back of his right hand was wrapped in a two inch-by-four inch gauze bandage with some first aid tape. “What happened there?” Penny asked, pointing to Mark’s hand.

“Jamie Jeffers tripped as she came up to ask some accounting questions, and my hand broke her fall. She’s OK, but I’m not so sure my hand is,” Mark replied.

“What’s with Jamie these days?” Penny asked. “First a kiss and now the claws; I’m a little afraid to hear what will be next. She sounds more dangerous than perhaps we had first thought.”

Penny wouldn’t realize until later how accurately that comment would foretell the future turn of events yet to come.

“Do you want me to take a look at your hand?” Penny asked.

“Yes, if you would, please,” Mark answered. “I think it has finally stopped bleeding, so a change of bandage would probably be good before I get going. Remember, I’m going over to Stan Bogelman’s to meet with him and Mike Holladay at 6:00 p.m.”

Penny got out the first aid supplies and cleaned up Mark’s flesh wound and put some liniment on it and replaced his old bandage.

After dinner, Mark gathered a few items and offered, “I shouldn’t be more than two hours, it being nearly a half-hour drive just to get there and another half-hour back.”

After kissing Penny good-bye, Mark got in his pickup and drove to Stan's, where Mike had already arrived.

Although Stan, Mike and Jamie would have preferred Mark driving to Jamie's that night, they knew he wouldn't go for it, at least without bringing Penny along with him, so they did the next best thing they could and sought to control Mark's alibi.

As Mark pulled into Stan's driveway, he unfortunately swung a little too wide to miss a garbage can on his left side, such that the right side of his pickup ended up accidentally bumping Mike's rear bumper, setting off Mike's car alarm in the process.

With the alarm sounding off loudly, Stan opened the front door while Mike turned off the alarm remotely. Mike saw Mark now standing by the car's bumper, with an apologetic look on his face.

"I'm sorry I hit your car, Mike; I've dented your bumper and put a few scratches on it," Mark offered, pointing at the damage. "I guess I didn't realize that I was that close to your car. I should have stopped and backed up to get over into this parking spot. Of course, I'll replace your bumper."

Mike Holladay wasn't at all concerned about his bumper. Mike wished he hadn't turned on his alarm out of habit; if he would have been thinking, he wouldn't have activated it. He wondered if the commotion effectively sabotaged the night's planned events. Looking at his watch, he realized that the 'go-no-go' hour had passed.

By the 'plan', Mark was supposedly already with Jamie for about 15 minutes, half the amount of time which he was 'supposed' to be with her that night.

The only way for Mike or Stan to call off the night's events would be to call Jamie directly, but Jamie had told them to not to contact her tonight, especially during 'crunch time'. After all, Jamie was supposed to be in the middle of distress, and a phone call to her cell phone in the height of events wouldn't play well with the contrived storyline.

“Surely this would be an exception,” Mike thought to himself. But he also knew the big bosses were growing quite impatient with the time delays, and that a pre-Christmas crime when everyone had family on their minds was considered as an ideal time to frame Mark.

Mike looked to Stan, to try and ask him a question with a glance if they should continue or cancel. Stan intentionally ignored Mike’s glance, not wanting to take responsibility either way of deciding to continue or pull the plug. That call was way over his pay-grade and he wasn’t about to influence matters in either direction. As far as Stan was concerned, it was Mike’s car that got hit and it was Mike’s car alarm which alerted the neighbors, so it was Mike’s problem.

But Mike was thinking that it was Stan’s problem; it was Stan’s house, Stan’s narrow driveway, Stan’s neighbors who may have heard the alarm, and Stan’s garbage can that should have been placed further away from the driveway which nominally caused the problem in the first place.

Mike ultimately decided he wouldn’t pull the plug if Stan wasn’t going to weigh in on the issue.

As time passed, however, Mike began getting increasingly nervous. He wasn’t used to such high-stakes pressure, and his anxiety could perhaps tip Mark off that everything was not well.

Sensing Mike’s discomfort, Mark decided to call it an early night. “It’s time for me to get going, guys,” Mark stated after being there only 15 minutes. “Sorry again Mike about the bumper. I’ll get you another one right away. What year is your vehicle?”

“No sweat, Mark; you don’t need to get me a new bumper,” Mike stated. “That bumper is among the least of that car’s problems.”

Mark drove home, getting there a little earlier than he had told Penny.

“I’m home,” Mark stated, as he hung his keys on the key ring.

"I didn't expect you for another 30 minutes or even an hour," Penny replied.

"I scraped Mike Holladay's bumper when I pulled into Stan's place, by accident," Mark admitted.

"Well, I guess it was a good thing you didn't do it on purpose," Penny replied, trying to lift Mark's spirits. "But I guess that means your driving skills aren't what they used to be."

"That's becoming more evident each passing day," answered Mark. "I just hope you don't try and take my keys from me any time soon. When that day arrives, I hope I won't be as difficult as was my father, incessantly complaining about not having any keys to drive any of the vehicles."

"Just shoot me now, and get it over with," Penny joked. "I don't know if I can take you going through such issues as did your father."

"It gives us something to look forward to," Mark replied.

"Perish the thought," Penny commented. "It sounds more like dread, horror, fear and anxiety."

Mark knew that his late father's dementia had proved tiring to those who had spent any considerable time around him. Vincent Evanston never really tired as long as he kept moving, and he offered his caretakers all sorts of problems which weren't always easily solved. Mark's comments to Penny were meant as casual reminders for her to condition herself for the inevitable, to prepare her mentally for the things yet to come.

At about 8:30 p.m., there was a loud and forceful knock on the door. Opening the door, Mark saw two uniformed sheriff's deputies in their coats and hats, bracing themselves against the cool evening air.

"Mark Evanston?" asked Deputy Jake Thorson.

“Yes, I’m Mark Evanston,” replied Mark, curious why the deputies would be requesting him by name. “What can I do for you?”

“Have we been correctly informed that Miss Jamie Jeffers works for you; that you are her boss?”

“I am the founder of Patriot Corps, where Jamie Jeffers has been a member for four or five months. She also performs some accounting and clerical work for us in the office, for the past few months,” Mark answered. “What’s this about?”

“Jamie Jeffers was attacked at home tonight, so we’re trying to gather as much information about the incident as we can as soon as possible from as many people who may have seen her today and may have knowledge which they may not realize is important,” responded the deputy, none of them at the time realizing that Mark would soon turn out to be the prime suspect.

Penny had just entered the room, when she heard the officer explain that Jamie had been attacked. “Is she OK?” Penny asked.

“Sorry, but we don’t know anything about the case yet, we’ve just been asked to bring your husband down to the station, at least if he’s willing to talk to the detectives looking into this incident,” the second deputy replied. “But as far as how she is doing, in our experience in cases such as this, doctors typically tell us that even if the physical scars heal quickly, that it is the emotional scars that will likely take much longer to heal.”

Deputy Thorson added, “The detective who questions your husband will undoubtedly know more than we do. We’re just being asked to help the detectives obtain accurate information more quickly, as the first few hours after an attack are the most critical.”

“Do you want me to come also?” asked Penny.

“We were just asked to bring in your husband,” answered the other deputy.

“Well, if it’s just the same, I’ll ride along with Mark and if I can help in any way, I’ll be available,” replied Penny.

“Actually, we want to take Mark with us,” responded Deputy Thorson. “If you wanted to follow us in your car, that would be acceptable.”

“I’ll follow and Mark and I can come home together when you’re done with us,” Penny commented, as Mark grabbed his coat and followed the deputies out to their car, trying to process everything that had gone on that day.

Mark was taken to the sheriff’s office and into an interrogation room where a senior detective was working on some paperwork until Mark arrived, Detective Bobby Fosgren.

“You must be Mark Evanston, Jamie Jeffers’ boss at Patriot Corps,” Detective Fosgren stated, as Mark was escorted into the room.

“Yes, I guess that would be me,” answered Mark. “Do you have any updates on Jamie’s condition? The deputies who brought me in didn’t really have much information to offer.”

“I’ve been told that the doctors said she is shook up and scared, but that she is in stable condition,” replied Detective Fosgren. “At this point, I don’t know much more than you. But my partner is waiting at the hospital and will question Ms. Jeffers as soon as the doctors allow it. Do you mind if I begin asking you a few questions?”

“Not at all,” Mark replied. “Go ahead.”

“We called you down here because we wanted to talk with people who know Jamie, to get a better idea of who she is, what she likes, who she hangs out with, her habits, her personality, her family history, where she’s from, and any incidents she may have had which caused you to question her judgment or her integrity,” Detective Forsgren stated.

“It helps us to have an idea of who we’re dealing with, especially in difficult cases such as this. Being her boss at work will typically provide us with a different perspective than perhaps other people in her life will give, and we want as many different perspectives as possible. I would like you to be as thorough as possible, giving me a run-down of your knowledge of Jamie, from your first recollection of her, to tonight.”

“I first heard about Jamie Jeffers before I ever met her,” Mark began. “I think she joined the Patriot Corps in mid-August of this year, although I don’t know who recruited her, off-hand.

“I first heard her name from colleagues who inferred that she was hard-working, smart, and pleasant. She was said to be attractive, probably in her late 30’s, and as far as anyone knew, single; never married or had any kids. I don’t know if she has family nearby; I don’t recall ever hearing anything specific about her family, from her or anyone. She only admitted to me that she grew up in an affectionate home but offered nothing more.

“My wife and I met Jamie on a bus ride up to Olympia for a Patriot Corps function on September 5th of this year. Jamie and another member, Mike Holladay, sat in the front seat of the bus on the passenger side, while my step-daughter Bethany Farnham-Summers sat next to Adam Ramsey in the front of the bus on the driver’s side. My wife Penny and I sat behind Bethany and Adam.

“I guess before going further, I should comment about Adam Ramsey,” Mark commented. “He turned out to be quite a piece of work.”

“Oh, really?” asked Detective Fosgren. “What do you mean?”

Mark relayed the story of Adam, telling the detective how Adam met Bethany that day and got well acquainted, in the aftermath of the bus crash which Mark also explained. Mark went into his poisoning, and the D.E.A. investigation he hadn’t heard anymore about.

Mark relayed that Adam was one of the few people with access to Mark's pills, and that he had vanished when Mark discovered his poisoning, with no one ever hearing from him again, even Bethany.

Detective Fosgren had Mark pause for a few moments while he wrote out some thoughts and put an asterisk beside Adam Ramsey's name.

"What did you say was the D.E.A. agent's name?" asked the detective.

"I don't think I did," Mark commented as he pulled out several business cards from his billfold. "It is Tim Gilbert, and his partner is Elizabeth Hogan. Here is their contact information."

Detective Fosgren wrote down the agents' names, phone numbers and email addresses.

"Ok, let's get back to your story," the detective directed.

"As I said, the bus accident threw those of us on the bus closer together, especially those of us in front which suffered some of the worst injuries," Mark commented.

"Jamie was quite a trooper, and very stoic about the whole accident. Penny was impressed with her character and she cared for Jamie the best she could afterwards. Penny and Jamie even went to lunch a few times together."

Mark continued on, telling the detective of the restaurant gathering where Jamie handed him an engraved pen and pencil set and then her surprise kiss. Detective Fosgren asked who was there, where it was, the date, time and for any other information Mark could recall.

Mark continued with his comments, telling the deputy about the incident at the office earlier in the day when he was getting ready to leave the office at 4:00 p.m., when Jamie tripped and scratched the back of his hand.

Detective Fosgren took special notice of that incident. “You state that Jamie tripped in your office late this afternoon, December 15, 2015, about 4:00 p.m. and scratched the back of your right hand, leaving three two-inch scratch marks, is that correct?”

“Yes, Detective, that is correct,” Mark stated. “Is that important?”

“Well, with her bumps and bruises caused by her attack,” the detective began, “if some of your skin or blood shows up under her fingernails on the same day she was beaten and raped, don’t you think that it would be important to know how and when your tissue got under her fingernails?”

“She was raped?” asked Mark, not really processing the rest of the sentence.

“We’re not absolutely sure yet,” Detective Fosgren stated, “but it appears that may be the case. As I stated, we still have a lot of investigating to do and she’s still with the doctors the last I heard. Will you allow a photographer take a picture of your scratches and me to get a swab of them?”

“I guess so,” replied Mark, unsure of what should be his proper response, being especially concerned about the swab.

The detective went out and grabbed a photographer who came in and took a picture of Mark’s face, then one further away showing his face and his hand, and then a close-up of the hand, beside a ruler to help show proper scale.

After the photographer left, a technician came in for swabbing Mark’s hand wound.

Detective Fosgren continued after the technician left. “Now you said Jamie apologized for scratching you, and she cleaned up your hand from the first aid kit and bandaged you up there at the office, is that correct?”

“Yes,” Mark responded. “That is correct.”

“Did anyone at the office see the commotion, or see your scratches or bandage?”

“I don’t know,” answered Mark. “Jamie didn’t shriek when she tripped, or anything. But she would have carried the first aid kit from the bathroom, and I walked out a few minutes later with the bandage on the back of my hand, but my coat sleeve may have covered it up.”

“What about the bandage coverings, and any bloody tissues, where were they put?” asked the detective.

“Jamie threw them in the garbage can in my office, next to my desk,” Mark answered. “We don’t have anyone cleaning the offices until Thursday night, so they should still be there.”

“Anything else happen tonight after you left your office?” asked the detective.

“Before going to Stan Bogelman’s house to meet him and Mike Holladay, I ate dinner at home with my wife, Penny,” Mark replied.

“Did your wife see your bandage, or your hand?” asked Detective Fosgren.

“Why yes, she took off my bloodied bandage, cleaned me up, and gave me a new bandage,” Mark answered.

“Again, where would we find the new bandage wrappers, and the old bandage?” asked the detective.

“In the kitchen’s garbage can, under the sink,” Mark answered.

“What time did you leave home?” asked the detective.

“Let’s see, I left the office at about 4:10 p.m., a few minutes later than I planned, because of Jamie,” Mark replied. “I would have arrived home at about 4:30 p.m. and was there about 45 minutes before I left. I got to Stan’s house just before 6:00 pm.

"I was trying to make sure I wasn't late, but accidentally came into his driveway a little too hot and clipped Mike Holladay's bumper, putting a few scratches in it and denting it ever so slightly.

"Mike's car alarm probably woke up the neighborhood, but Mike got it shut off pretty quickly. My hitting his car seemed to shake him up quite a bit, even though he said he wasn't concerned about his vehicle. It was odd, but he seemed more concerned about causing a scene with Stan's neighbors. I told him I would replace the bumper, but he said it wasn't necessary."

Detective Fosgren asked many questions about the incident, the make and model of car, the color, overall car condition, exact location and size of the scratches and dent on the bumper, where Mark's vehicle was damaged in the accident, etc.

"Was there anyone else at Stan Bogelman's house beside you, Stan and Mike Holladay?" asked Detective Fosgren.

"No, not while I was there — from just before 6:00 p.m. until I left at about 6:15 p.m. — after which I drove straight home," Mark answered.

"Did you happen to notice if any of Stan's neighbors came out or saw you after the car alarm went off?" asked the detective.

"Can't say that I did," Mark replied. "I was concentrating on reading Mike's reaction and to apologize to him to notice any neighbors who may or may not have looked out their windows or came outside."

"I want to call my partner at the hospital to see if he's had a chance yet to talk with Jamie," stated the detective, as Mark had answered all of his immediate questions. "I may then want to ask you a few more questions, if you don't mind waiting."

"Sure, I'll wait," replied Mark.

Detective Fosgren was gone far longer than Mark thought he'd be, well over an hour.

"I'm sorry I took so long, I didn't expect to be gone anywhere near as long as I was," offered Detective Fosgren, as he came back into the interrogation room, suddenly far more serious and formal, even to the point of being quite standoffish.

"You said you met Stan Bogelman and Mike Holladay tonight at 6:00 p.m. and that you were there for about 15 minutes before you left, and that Mike's car alarm sounded off after your vehicle hit it upon your arrival, is that correct?" asked the detective.

"Yes, that's correct, as closely to the times as I recall," Mark answered calmly.

"The deputies stated that your wife Penny is here waiting for you, is that correct?" asked Detective Fosgren.

"Yes," Mark responded. "I came here with the deputies in the back of their car, while Penny drove my pickup."

"Is that the same pickup you were driving when you hit Mike Holladay's car?" asked the detective.

"Yes," Mark answered.

"Will you give permission to our investigators to impound your vehicle, so we can photograph your bumper and note any damage very thoroughly?" asked the detective.

"Over an accident with no more than several hundred dollars of damage?" asked Mark. "I don't get it; what is it that I'm missing?"

"I sent a deputy over to talk with Mike Holladay and Stan Bogelman. He just got back to me and said that both Stan and Mike deny you were at Stan's tonight, although you were supposed to be there," replied the detective.

"What?" asked Mark. "That is rather odd — I don't get it; are you sure your colleague interviewed Stan Bogelman and Mike Holladay or are you sure that Stan and Mike understood he was talking about tonight, at 6:00 pm?"

"We don't understand it either," replied Detective Fosgren. "When we take down stories from different witnesses and different suspects, we always look for inconsistencies. This is a huge inconsistency that we very much want to understand, as soon as possible.

"Your story could perhaps be verified if we can analyze both vehicles and note any corresponding damage between them, especially if any neighbors heard the commotion or saw you and your vehicle. Can we impound your pickup? But you'll have to catch a ride home, if you leave your vehicle with us."

"Yes, by all means," Mark responded. "Please confirm my story."

"I would also like you to wait here while I ask your wife some questions, since she is already here, if you don't mind," stated Detective Fosgren.

"Can I first speak with her, to make sure she is doing ok?" asked Mark.

"That is what we'd like to keep from happening, you and your wife talking after you've been questioned but before she has been," answered Detective Fosgren. "Remember, we're looking for inconsistency and it is best for us to inquire before any witnesses or suspects are able to better align their stories."

"I am beginning to understand a few things," stated Mark. "Only I don't know yet if you consider me a witness or a suspect."

"That's what I'm trying to decipher also, Mr. Evanston," Detective Fosgren stated in as serious of tone as Mark had before heard. "So, do you have any objection to me speaking with your wife, Penny Evanston?"

"No, I have no objection," replied Mark, who didn't figure his objection would have done any good at that point. "But do you have any more information yet on Jamie?"

“No, not yet,” answered the detective. “But the doctors are supposed to allow my partner in to question her at any time.”

Detective Fosgren left Mark behind in the interrogation room, calling Penny back to another room.

“Good evening, Mrs. Evanston, I’m Detective Bobby Fosgren, and I’m looking into the incident involving Miss Jamie Jeffers and I would like to ask you a few questions, if that is alright.”

“That’s fine, but it has been a very long time since I’ve seen my husband, is everything OK?” Penny asked.

“Yes, he was also concerned about you having to wait so long, but otherwise he is fine,” said the detective.

“Please tell me about your past experiences with Jamie Jeffers, from as far back as you remember,” he asked. “We’re trying to get a better idea of the victim, what kind of person she is; they type of activities she enjoys, who she hangs out with, etc.”

Penny relayed meeting Jamie at the September 5th bus ride and spoke of the accident and how many of the injured bonded after that. She also spoke of Adam Ramsey, and how deceived she was and how mad she remained toward Adam, not only because of his apparent poisoning of her husband, but also his cruel use of her daughter who was still going through a rough divorce.

Penny told of having lunch several times with Jamie, of Mark’s gift from Jamie and several other Patriot Corps members, of Jamie’s kiss, and of Jamie scratching Mark’s hand at work before Mark came home for dinner that evening.

Getting the appropriate information out of Penny which was fully consistent with Mark’s, including Jamie’s kiss and especially her scratching the back of Mark’s right hand at work at 4:00 p.m., Detective Fosgren released both Mark and Penny, not yet having heard from his partner who was still waiting to interview Jamie.

Bare Liberty

Mark told Penny the detectives were impounding Mark's vehicle to examine his bumper, and that either they'd have to call a cab or have someone pick them up. Noting that it was almost midnight, they opted for a cab.

Mark and Penny didn't say much during the cab ride home, and Mark didn't go into things much once at home since it was so late. He thought there was no sense getting Penny all worked up when she should get some sleep.

With the East Coast being three hours ahead of the West Coast, Mark called Peter at 5:30 a.m. Pacific Time and told him of the previous night's events. Steve was brought into a three-way conversation as soon as Peter realized the gravity of the situation, and that police were looking into Mark's possible involvement.

Steve made immediate plans to fly out later that day; things weren't adding up and he feared things would be getting worse before they got better. He didn't like the fact one bit that several Patriot Corps members were giving the deputies stories denying Mark's whereabouts during the time of an attack on a female member who was also an employee of the organization.

Penny woke up an hour later and made a fresh pot of coffee. Mark began filling her in on his questioning, and Detective Fosgren's statement that both Mike Holladay and Stan Bogelman denied Mark came over to Stan's last night and was there between 6:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

"What's going on?" Penny asked. "First it was Adam Ramsey, now it is Mike Holladay and Stan Bogelman. What's next?"

It didn't take too long to find out. At 10:15 a.m., two Sheriff's deputies walked into the Patriot Corps office and approached the receptionist, asking for Mark Evanston.

The receptionist called Mark up front on the intercom, and when he came up to the reception area, he asked the officers, "What can I do for you gentlemen? I am Mark Evanston."

“You can come with us, Mr. Evanston, we’re placing you under arrest for the attack last evening on Miss Jamie Jeffers,” they replied. “You are being charged with aggravated assault, first degree rape, and second degree homicide.”

Mark was having difficulty processing the words that he was hearing, but was nevertheless able to get out the words, “What do you mean, *homicide*? Last night the detective said Jamie would be fine in a few weeks, at least physically.”

“After Miss Jeffers gave a full accounting of her attack naming you as her attacker, later in the night she took a terrible turn for the worse and she died this morning on the operating table while surgeons were trying to discover why her body was suddenly shutting down,” answered one of the deputies, even though he had never before offered pertinent information to any alleged offender.

“Before you say anything else, Mr. Evanston, we need to read you your rights,” said the second deputy, as he began issuing the familiar Miranda rights warning.

Upon hearing that police officers were arresting her husband, Penny, who had gone in to the office to cover Jamie’s position, shrieked involuntarily. She began sobbing when she heard that her husband was being charged with homicide. By the time the handcuffs were clicked close around Mark’s wrists, Penny was approaching catatonia.

“Penny, please call Peter Dennison and inform him of the turn of events. I love you, Dear,” Mark offered as he was walked out and placed in the back of the patrol car, this time in handcuffs.

Penny had great difficulty talking to Peter on the phone; another office worker had to end up informing Peter of the turn of events and Mark’s arrest for murder.

Bare Liberty

Penny wasn't up for driving, so Bethany came and picked her up at the office and the two of them went down to the jail to see if there was anything they could do. When they realized they wouldn't even be able to see Mark for 72 hours, Bethany took her mom home. Penny had a horrible night, unable to even rest, let alone sleep.

Although Penny was initially very sad about Jamie's attack, when she found out that Jamie had named Mark as her attacker, Penny could not even feel sad about Jamie's death.

It was becoming quite obvious that Jamie had willingly gotten herself involved with the wrong crowd to frame an innocent man — Penny's husband.

Penny now felt as if a small measure of justice had already been inflicted upon the guiltiest party who had willingly betrayed her own friends.

Now Penny needed to help prove that Mark was not the guilty party.

Chapter Twelve

Mark was taken to the Clark County Jail and processed in booking; it was Wednesday, December 16th, 2015.

After his handcuffs were removed, he undressed and put on his jailhouse blues for his mug shot. Next he was fingerprinted and had an identification bracelet strapped to his wrist.

Because his charges included rape, Mark was placed in the F-Pod where sex offenders were housed. This housing area was away from the remainder of the inmates who would otherwise provide these offenders with a little jail-house justice of their own if they were able.

The clanging shut of the cell door behind Mark rang out as an audible reminder that he was no longer free to come and go as he pleased.

Mark was trying to process the information that Jamie Jeffers was dead. He was flabbergasted that she had involved herself in something so wrong; he had definitely pegged Jamie completely opposite than she had turned out to be. So too had Mark badly misfigured about Adam Ramsey. But even more strangely, these two also both flew under Penny's radar, which was normally much more adept at getting an accurate reading of people.

After Peter Dennison had hung up the phone from speaking with Penny after Mark's arrest, he had asked his secretary to book him an open-ended, one-way flight to Portland as soon as possible. He next called Donald Heath, a Portland criminal attorney who was a long-time friend of Dr. Glen Carver, the Portland neurosurgeon to whom Peter had three years earlier referred Mark.

Don Heath arrived to talk with Mark at 3:30 p.m. and spoke with him for an hour and a half in the interview room, getting Mark's version of events regarding Jamie Jeffers.

Don told Mark that he would get a copy of the police report and speak with Detective Fosgren to review the evidence they had on hand and he would speak with Mark again late the next morning or early afternoon.

Peter and Steve arrived in Portland at 8:30 p.m., rented a car and checked into their hotel.

The next morning after breakfast Steve dropped off Peter at the Evanston home while he went to Portland to pick up some security devices. He would later meet with staff at the local Patriot Corps office to brief them on the updated security measures and to learn any information they may have regarding Jamie's attack or Mark's supposed involvement.

Penny and Peter had a short meeting with attorney Don Heath at 8:00 am. Penny was thankful Peter was in town, for he would keep tabs on all the appropriate information needed to help ensure Mark stood the best chance of being freed and she didn't have to concern herself with such important matters since she was having great difficulty even gathering her bearings.

Don Heath told Penny and Peter that he didn't yet have much information, but that he would be meeting with Detective Fosgren at 10:00 a.m. to see what evidence they had collected on Jamie's attack and anything which pointed toward Mark. Peter and Penny made a 3:00 p.m. meeting to again talk with the attorney after he had found out more information and the attorney had another chance to speak with Mark.

At 11:30 a.m., Mark was ushered to an interview room where he could meet with his attorney. Next to Don at the table was a relative mountain of paperwork. After the guard closed the door behind him, Mark asked "Is all that paperwork on this case?"

“Yes,” replied the attorney. “I have to admit that I have never seen a criminal case compile this much paperwork so quickly, seemingly nailing closed your coffin. It was almost as if all this had been prepared beforehand, so it could be simply laid at the detective’s feet at the appropriate time.

“As you know, Mark, Ms. Jeffers was allegedly attacked and raped. You’ve already heard that she specifically named you as her attacker and rapist in her sworn affidavit. You may not yet know that she also said that you two had been having an affair for over a month, but that she had been getting nervous because you were growing increasingly erratic and even zealous and possessive.

“To protect herself, she said she hired a private eye, whom she curiously could not or would not name, to photograph the two of you together. She said she wanted to have evidence of your involvement with her, which she could give police if her fears ever came to pass.

“Here are the photographs the detectives found after Jamie told them where she had hidden them, along with hotel and dinner receipts, which information Jamie had kept in a folder in case she ever needed to protect herself from you.”

“That’s utterly preposterous!” Mark exclaimed. “She cannot have photographs of us having an affair, because we didn’t and I wasn’t even ever alone with her. Any evidence she would have would be incomplete or wholly fabricated.”

“Here’s a picture of you two at a restaurant, where she’s giving you a gift and touching your shoulder with her hand, and another one of her kissing you on the cheek, quite affectionately I must add,” stated Don. “Most obviously, that is a picture of you with the woman who has been identified to me as Miss Jamie Jeffers.

“Yes, these two photographs are legitimate, although in the current context you are offering, their implication is false.

"It now makes sense to me why she kissed me; I didn't understand at the time why she did, for it seemed rather contrived and out of the blue," Mark replied. "Six of us went to Clancy's last week, Thursday evening, I think. Stan Bogelman, Mike Holladay, Denise Burton, and Jill Dodge were there with us also.

"Ask any of them about the evening, and they should be able to set the record straight, including the abrupt kiss. I received an engraved pen and pencil set, but I think it was from all of them and others at the office."

"Well, detectives have already taken statements from Stan Bogelman and Mike Holladay," Don stated. "They both said that the physical connection between you and Jamie was obvious, that she couldn't keep her hands off you and that you were wholly receptive to it. They admitted to being at the restaurant, but they said that you two may as well have been alone, so possessive of each other were you both.

"Stan and Mike both stated that after the September 5th bus accident that you and Jamie seemed to be getting quite close and were fast becoming inseparable."

"We must keep in mind that both Stan and Mike also denied me ever going over to Stan's the night Jamie was attacked," offered Mark. "I think we should conclude that the three of them were involved in a clever plan to frame me. But I bet Stan and Mike are now very nervous after Jamie's death; I doubt they signed on for murder. Although, I guess one or both of them could be Jamie's killer."

"Since their stories coincide with one another but are diametrically opposed to your story, if you are telling the truth, there must be some level of collusion between them," offered Don. "Such collusion would tie in with you being poisoned by Adam Ramsey, but I sure hate the thought of our defense being some conspiracy theory that several Patriot Corps members sought to frame you.

“Either way, this trial won’t look good for the Patriot Corps; it could easily prove to be the death knell of the organization.”

“And there you have your motive,” Mark told Don. “Silencing the Patriot Corps would be a nice feather in someone’s cap.”

“So, what other ‘evidence’ do the detectives have against me?” asked Mark.

“It doesn’t look good; most sensational of the evidence against you, which we have to expect to find its way one way or another into the media are these bedroom shots which explicitly show Ms. Jeffers with a man who certainly looks to be you,” stated the attorney, matter-of-factly, as he laid several dozen graphic photographs in front of Mark.

“I must admit that it is rather convenient, however, that given the angle of the shots, given the low level of lighting, or given Ms. Jeffers’ bountiful body parts which gratuitously distract the viewer’s attention and help hide the man’s face, that this face supposedly of yours remains hidden very well, every time.

“Even the pictures which nominally show you walking into or out of the hotel don’t show you well.

“It seems overly coincidental that in every bedroom shot is this woman in sexually-explicit poses which is clearly Ms. Jeffers, but then the male is never clearly visualized.

“Nominally the pictures were taken for the express purpose of identifying the man, but yet there is not one decent photograph ever showing him clearly, other than at the restaurant. That seems rather convenient; too convenient, given the supposed purpose for these photographs.

“And the photographer seems too readily accessible to the lovers, too, as though they would surely had to have known that he was in the room with them.

“The man’s body type, coloring and hair style match yours, but it could match a hundred other men, or men made to look like you.”

Mark thumbed through the sexually-explicit photographs which showed a man and Jamie Jeffers enjoying one another’s company, showing the man’s backside and strongly-angled profile, always with much of the man’s face covered, even if only by Jamie’s bare breasts.

Something was off about the pictures and it took him a few moments to realize that the man in the photograph didn’t have any hip replacement scars. While Mark’s scar on his left side wasn’t overly noticeable, his right side was still fresh enough that it would have easily stood out in the pictures.

“These pictures cannot be of me,” Mark relayed, as he pulled down the back of his pants far enough to show the top of his scar. “There are no hip replacement scars on this man. If it were me, you’d clearly see my 10” scars, from the middle of my buttocks out to the side of the hip and then down the thigh another five inches.”

Mark looked at another picture which showed the man’s right knee bent in strong flexion. “And look at that right knee, and then look at mine,” Mark relayed as he pulled up his pant leg.

“See, I’ve had Osgood-Schlatter’s condition in my knee for over 35 years. It was formed when I was about 15 years old, as my quadriceps muscle became stronger than my leg bone which hadn’t yet fully ossified from childhood. The muscle slowly pulled the outer layers of the leg away from the inner layers of bone and then ossified.

“The bump under my kneecap, my tibial tuberosity, has been massive ever since my mid-teens, but this man’s is normal.

“And look at the inside of his left leg, and then look at mine,” Mark continued, now pulling up his left pant leg and pulling down his sock. “I’ve also had this strong indent below my sock-line again since I was about 12 years old, when I flipped Robert Mills’ Honda ATC 90 backward while riding up his steep canyon, when the three-wheeler’s foot-peg crushed this part of my leg as it rolled over me.

“And there is this picture, if you can concentrate on that man’s right hand rather than Ms. Jeffers’ left breast which that hand is shown cupping, look at the knuckle of that middle finger and then compare it with mine.

“My brother Daniel pushed me off the arm of my parent’s couch when I was maybe 10 years old. I landed on my right hand and my middle finger hyper-extended, breaking open the outside of the joint capsule of that finger between the proximal and intermediate phalanges, causing a large bump on my knuckle.

“The doctor told me the swelling would go down within three or four weeks, but instead it ossified and 40 years later it still looks swollen. These pictures clearly prove that it is not me in bed with Jamie Jeffers, but perhaps some man unconvincingly meant to look like me.”

“I will bring up these points with Detective Fosgren right away,” stated a smiling attorney. “It is becoming apparent to me that someone has been going to great lengths to frame you, but that maybe they weren’t quite as thorough as they needed to be, as you point out.

“These pictures actually prove that it wasn’t you in bed with Jamie and I’m beginning to wonder if Jamie’s death was actually brought on after-the-fact as a separate assault, rather than a rare and unusual complication of what is likely a contrived assault.

“If Jamie’s death was brought on by some separate incident after her interview in the hospital where she named you as her attacker — undoubtedly so you could be charged with homicide but also probably to keep her from later recanting if the orchestrated evidence began to fall apart as it already has — then we can get the homicide charge dropped right away. We only need to prove a separate incident as the actual cause of death.

“And these pictures should help get the rape and assault charges dropped, since Jamie’s statement said her rape occurred because she wanted to end your existing affair but that you didn’t want to stop seeing her and that you forced your way onto her.

“Well, if the evidence of your supposed affair was falsified, then the ‘existing’ affair never existed; which means that you couldn’t get upset about stopping something which never got started in the first place. Thus the whole story breaks apart, meaning you are innocent, guilty only of being framed.

“Since Ms. Jeffers has died, the prosecution has little choice but to use their next-best offense, which is her signed and sworn affidavit naming you as her attacker and her taped interview.

“But if this still goes to court, I will be challenging use of her affidavit, asserting there is no way that it could possibly fall under the dying declaration exception, since at the time she offered it, she had no indication whatsoever of her impending death.

“But even if she had believed her death imminent from her supposed injuries when she had signed her affidavit, we’d still object to its introduction into evidence in her murder trial because you would be denied your defendant’s right to face his accusers as guaranteed by the Sixth Amendment.

“Oh, and one more thing,” Don began. “Detective Fosgren has evidence that you hit something with your front bumper, but cannot confirm it was Mike Holladay’s car because Mike was evidently rear-ended later the same night Jamie was attacked. There is almost no way that investigators can now compare your minor damage to Mike’s car which had been extensively damaged. And Mike claims he didn’t know anything about you hitting his vehicle.”

“There sure are a lot of coincidences in this case, all of them to my detriment,” Mark offered.

“Fortunately,” replied Don, “too many coincidences can start giving the police a sense that all is not as it appears in this case, but sadly it still offers them nothing concrete to help free you.

“I’ll also make sure you get to analyze the rest of the evidence Detective Fosgren accumulates in the case, to hear your comments on it,” Don said as he gathered up the material and said good-bye.

Don Heath was able to thoroughly enjoy his lunch, confident that his current high-profile murder case with local and East-Coast coverage would ultimately prove that his client was innocent even though the cards initially appeared fully stacked against him.

It just didn’t get any better than that, he thought; extensive national news coverage in the beginning alleging the guilt of his client, but in the end the skilled attorney would be able to free his client, getting plenty of free national publicity in the process. This trial would provide Don Heath with the *Perry Mason*[™] moment of his career.

At 3:00 p.m., Penny and Peter walked into Don Heath’s office and were ushered into the conference room. Don came in 10 minutes later and brought with him the graphic photographs.

Before bringing out the pictures, Don warned Penny as to their explicit nature. He also explained to Penny that Mark had already proved that the man in the photographs was not him.

Even with Don’s warning, Penny was still shocked by the pictures. The photos showed sex scenes she wouldn’t expect in anything except in filthy men’s magazines.

While Penny never believed the allegations against Mark, she still had to admit that her first thought after seeing the pictures were that they were of her husband and Jamie. But the pictures definitely provided Penny with compelling evidence that Jamie Jeffers, a woman Penny thought she knew, was voluntarily involved in something so terribly wrong.

Penny saw the photographs which clearly showed the man's posterior, showing no evidence of Mark's ample hip replacement scars. Mark's scars had always made Penny cringe, so she never really looked at them, but she certainly knew they were there.

Penny next saw the pictures which clearly showed the man's right knee, left ankle and right hand. Again these pictures were definitely of someone other than Mark.

Don stated that Jamie Jeffers' taped interview and sworn affidavit where she named Mark as her attacker were damaging pieces of evidence against Mark; evidence they could no longer hope to impeach directly, given Jamie's untimely death. And, of course, Jamie's death made Mark's troubles so much worse, since he was now charged with homicide, in addition to rape and assault.

Don Heath also said that initial lab results confirmed the skin under Jamie's fingernails and blood on Jamie's shirt matched Mark's blood-type, and if DNA results came back proving it was Mark's skin and blood, that they would be very damaging to Mark's case also.

"But the DNA test results *will* come back positive, Don, because Mark already acknowledged that Jamie scratched him at 4:00 p.m. at the office. Since I took off Mark's bandage myself when he got home that night at about 4:30 p.m. and cared for his wounds, I absolutely and positively know his scratches weren't made later at about 6:00 p.m. as Jamie stated in her sworn statement," Penny offered.

"Unfortunately, even if you testified to such facts at trial, your testimony would likely simply appear to the jury as strongly biased in favor of your husband," Don stated. "They probably would not believe you. We're hoping to find someone at the office or elsewhere who saw Mark's scratched hand before 6:00 p.m., but we haven't yet found that person. Your testimony in addition to theirs would be collaborative and therefore favorable, but your testimony by itself would be of little assistance.

“Detectives searched Mark’s office for evidence of bandage wrappers and alcohol wipes to corroborate his version of events, but they didn’t find anything in the trash can where Mark last saw them. This lack of objective evidence confirming Mark’s version of events is damaging.

“And the soiled bandages in your trash that was found could have been placed in there any time before the police picked them up, well after Jamie’s attack, so they’re not much help. The used bandage should show that it was of the same type as those found at the office, which will be better evidence if it is of a different type than what you have at home.”

“I don’t recall if we have the same or different bandages between home and office,” Penny admitted.

“I also found out that a few strands of hair found on Jamie Jeffers’ clothes which appear to be Mark’s have been sent in for DNA testing; it won’t be good if those results again reveal it conclusively to be Mark’s,” Don stated.

“But some of Mark’s hair could easily have been planted,” Penny stated immediately. “It’s not exactly as if Mark has a full head of hair, so it shouldn’t be much of a stretch to figure that he probably loses a little of it every day, including at the office. A few strands of his hair could have easily been pulled off his jacket while it was hanging up. Certainly anyone going to this length to frame Mark wouldn’t have much difficulty finding a few pieces of damaging DNA evidence to plant at the crime scene or on the supposed victim. It cannot be that easy to frame someone, is it?”

“I’m afraid it can be, if someone takes the time to plan things out and is at all thorough,” stated Don. “Unfortunately being framed rings of conspiracy, and wild conspiracy theories are simply a tough sell to 12 jurors, for few ‘normal’ people have ever heard of such things like that actually happening to anyone in the real world, to their friends or family.

“Don’t worry too much, though; the evidence planted against Mark is already starting to unravel at the seams, and this is only two days after Jamie’s attack. We are doing very well; we just have more work to do.”

Peter and Penny thanked the attorney for his efforts and drove back to Penny’s home, where they were scheduled to meet with Steve and several more Patriot Corps security personnel who flew in from Washington, D.C. to dig deep into the mystery.

Randy would be arriving a day later, as he was stopping off in Denver to pick up some specialized security supplies before flying on to Portland.

“Penny, I want to introduce you to Dennis Chen and Jeff Roberts, several members of our security staff back in Washington, D.C. who are here to help Randy and I prove Mark is innocent,” Steve began, as Penny, Dennis and Jeff said ‘hello’ to one another.

“We consider this attack on Mark to be a primary attack on the Patriot Corps, but we are also on the lookout for additional threats,” Steve continued.

“We feel it imperative to again step up security protocols and dig even deeper into the security budget. Here are some body cameras which I picked up today for everyone to wear, much like the ones law enforcement personnel throughout the country are beginning to use to document everything which goes on in front of the wearer.

“If we would have implemented these cameras a month ago, Mark would not be in jail today defending against the false charges of homicide, rape and assault. His camera would have shown him to be at Stan Bogelman’s with Mike Holladay at the appropriate hour, two men who are obvious participants in this plot.

“We are going to start investigating these two men immediately, running over their lives with a fine tooth comb and seeing what we can dig up. We will also check with Stan’s neighbors to see if any of them can confirm Mark setting off Mike’s car alarm at 6:00 pm.

“When we talk with Stan and Mike, we’re going to make sure they know that Jamie’s death was not some fluke result of her supposed attack, but an orchestrated event which maybe even happened in her hospital room, by someone intent on killing her to better frame Mark and shut her up.

“We’re going to make sure that those two men realize that whoever killed Jamie will likely want to kill them next and that cooperation with the police who can offer them protection is their only hope.

“We’ll also track down Adam Ramsey, as he was undoubtedly mixed up with this same group. We’re hoping he is still alive, and that when pressured that he will shed more light on these events.

“And then there is Mark’s double who participated in the sex pictures. Obviously, he is a real man, so we are going to uncover every rock under which he could have possibly hidden to try and find him.

“There was undoubtedly also a photographer, so we’ll search for him too. We have our work cut out for us, but we have a few leads and we have some ideas where to look. We’ll bring even more people in from D.C. or hire them locally for as long as we need if we must, but we have to anticipate Patriot Corps’ funds drying up.”

As Steve began to conclude his discussion, he offered one more item, “Peter, you and Janet have to prioritize the organization’s future efforts and reallocate funds to where they are most needed.”

“I don’t want to put words in Janet’s mouth, but I know she’ll agree with me, that all efforts must be made to clear up this mess here in Vancouver; everything hinges on it,” Peter replied. “If we fail here, Patriot Corps will cease to be an organization in a mere matter of months and all our work to date will be all for naught.

“I have a conference call scheduled with Janet in the morning and I’ll give you your formal marching orders after that, but I’m confident you’ll be able to proceed as you’ve indicated, following your training which is serving us well.”

“OK,” said Steve. “We’re not going to solve anything here. We’ll be prioritizing our activities tonight and get moving first thing in the morning, after your formal go-ahead.”

“Alright,” said Peter. “I’ll call you in the morning as soon as I know anything.”

Steve, Peter, Dennis, and Jeff said their good-byes to Penny, leaving her alone in her home.

Penny thought of Mark sitting alone in his jail cell, but she knew that Mark’s surroundings wouldn’t affect him any too much, because he never really seemed to notice if his surroundings were stark or plush, extravagant or bare, cold or hot. He did, however, notice when she was not by his side.

Chapter Thirteen

Peter called Steve early Friday morning, December 18th. “All approved; whatever the Patriot Corps could possibly muster is at your disposal.”

“Message received, loud and clear,” Steve replied. “Don’t forget the body cam, Peter.”

“I have mine on,” Peter affirmed.

Randy Frederickson arrived in Portland late in the morning and brought with him the ballistic t-shirts he picked up in Denver. He had more on order, as the items were quite expensive and therefore not well-stocked in all sizes. Much of their expense was because of their lack of bulk which is normally associated with bullet-proof vests. But their lightweight nature made them more likely to be worn and less likely to be noticed, both attributes worth the price for anyone who could somehow afford to pay for them.

After distributing the t-shirts, Jeff Roberts went along with Randy as they began concentrating their efforts on finding Mark’s sex-double and photographer.

Dennis Chen partnered with Steve as they turned their attention to Stan Bogelman and Mike Holladay, two men whose lives may actually be in danger.

Steve and Dennis went to Stan’s home where they found a very nervous man who was clearly in over his head, who had foolishly remained at his house frozen like a deer in the headlights. Stan’s signed witness statement denied Mark Evanston had ever visited Stan’s house the night of Jamie’s attack and maintained that Mark and Jamie were visibly close and were likely having an affair.

Steve began to pressure Stan by telling him everyone knew that he, Jamie and Mike had been working to frame Mark; the consistency of their obvious lies necessarily showed coordinated teamwork.

With Jamie dead, Steve argued, it therefore stood to reason that Stan and Mike would be next, unless, of course, one or both of them had killed her.

Steve hammered home that either Stan or Mike murdered Jamie or they were likely the next targets since they had already served much of their primary purpose with their signed witness statements, especially if there was any chance they would fold under intense questioning. Steve admitted that if he was their boss, with their nervousness they would already both be dead.

Being accused of murder while worrying about being murdered, it didn't take long for Stan to begin squealing like a stuck pig.

Stan said he didn't know who was the actual mastermind behind the plot or who killed Jamie or how. He told Steve that Jamie had been his contact and that she had paid him \$10,000 to help frame Mark.

"She originally offered me \$5,000 and I told her 'no'," Stan relayed to Steve. "Well, then she offered \$7.5k, and finally \$10k, but I still said 'no'. And then she did something I never expected, she used her womanly wiles to seduce me and I found I couldn't keep saying 'no' to such great sex. She proved to be powerfully seductive and kept at me and on me until I agreed. I simply didn't have the willpower to refuse."

Stan said he never dreamed that anything so bad would come out of their work, especially for Jamie. He didn't buy the idea that Jamie had some medical complication from her contrived assault, but he still claimed that he didn't know who gave her the complimentary bruises or caused her death.

"So, I take it you now readily admit that you lied to police about Mark Evanston not being at your home at the time Jamie Jeffers was supposedly assaulted and raped?" asked Steve, point blank.

“You’re right; I lied and so did Jamie and Mike. Mark Evanston was here at home with Mike Holladay and me from 6:00 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. the night of Jamie’s supposed assault and rape. Mark was innocent and Mike and I were paid to help frame him, denying his true alibi and suggesting a false affair between Mark and Jamie,” Stan answered.

“How did Mike Holladay get involved?” Steve asked.

“After I had been recruited, Jamie asked me if I had any trusted friends who would like to earn some extra cash and who knew how to keep their mouth shut. I told her about Mike, a friend of mine from my high school days, who used to get into a little bit of trouble with me, but nothing ever like this.

“Jamie ultimately gave him \$5,000 and also sealed up the deal with great sex, but I think he would have done it for the sex alone.”

“Since you are friends, why don’t you call Mike now, so all of us can talk together,” Steve instructed Stan.

“OK,” Stan replied, since his conversation with Steve helped him conclude that he and Mike were clearly in way over their heads. He dialed Mike’s cell number, but the call went straight to voice mail.

“He didn’t answer, which is strange,” said Stan. “I just spoke with him two hours ago, and he didn’t indicate that he would be going anywhere or doing anything yet. He was also trying to figure out what to do, but we didn’t want to cover any specifics on the phone.”

“Why don’t you take us to his place?” asked Steve. “And we can all talk there.”

“Alright,” Stan said, as he grabbed his coat and went with Steve and Dennis to Mike’s house just a few miles away.

Getting in the passenger seat of the car while Dennis drove and followed Stan's directions, Steve grabbed his body camera and downloaded the digital recording of Stan's confession into the laptop. Once the download was complete, Steve emailed Peter Dennison and Janet Davidson a copy, along with the short message: "One down..."

"It's that duplex on the corner," Stan pointed out as the body cameras were both rolling. "There's Mike's car parked in the driveway, all banged up."

"After Mark left my place the night of Jamie's contrived assault, Mike drove around slowly until some anxious guy in a nice car began tailgating him, and then Mike slammed on his brakes. The other driver kind of freaked out at Mike, but Mike said he thought he saw a kid run out in front of a parked car, so the guy calmed down, even though there hadn't been any kid running around."

"Anyhow, Mike wanted to hide any possible sign of damage from Mark's pickup, while he didn't mind getting a replacement car and maybe a few extra insurance dollars thrown in for good measure. I think Mike had pulled off that rear-end gag a time or two in his past, so he had the kinks worked out pretty well by now."

The three men got out of the car and walked up to the door of the house. Stan knocked on the door as Steve and Dennis stood back and off to one side. After no one answered, Stan tried the door and found that it was unlocked.

"Mike? It's Stan, are you home?" Stan shouted out after he opened the door and walked in.

Stan's answer came by way of two shots being fired into his chest, from the living room. Thrown backwards by the shots, he was dead before he even hit the floor.

As Steve and Dennis rushed into the building and began to return fire, the shooter bolted out the back door off the dining room.

Steve ran after the assailant, while Dennis checked for signs of life for Stan and then Mike Holladay, whose lifeless body was found in the kitchen, also killed with a double tap to the chest.

Dennis called 911 to report the deaths and gunfire, along with the information that one assailant fled the scene on foot while being chased by Dennis' partner, with Dennis describing both men to the dispatcher also.

Steve came back shortly, never having gained sight of the shooter outside the house, who had too large of a lead and was too fast of a runner.

The duplex had been ransacked, evidently to make sure Mike hadn't left behind anything which would have provided police with evidence that Mike was involved in Mark's frame-up and had falsified his statement to police.

Looking at Stan's lifeless body that had been alive just minutes before, Steve felt a slight twinge of guilt for having just a few hours earlier put on his ballistic t-shirt to specifically help protect himself against such events. But Steve knew that the choices Stan had made sent him down his path which just ended in his violent death.

With the stakes of the investigation into Mark's framing escalating, now involving multiple murders, Steve figured every precaution was in order to protect valuable evidence. And Stan's murder being caught on camera was of course important evidence. Steve downloaded his body cam file and sent it off to Janet and Peter, knowing that the dissemination of this evidence increased its safety.

Police arrived minutes later and began questioning Steve and Dennis at length. Seeing their body cameras, the first thing the police from the City of Vancouver asked was who they were and why did they have technology that even the local police didn't have yet.

Citing evidence in a homicide, the police confiscated both Steve's and Dennis' body cameras.

Steve hadn't really thought about the body cameras being confiscated by police; in his mind it was still quite unnatural for him to think of himself as being anything else but active law enforcement.

Sheriff's Detective Bobby Fosgren was called to the police scene, since the double murders seemed intricately linked with Jamie Jeffers' case. While the city police remained in charge of these latest two murders, they kept the County Sheriff's detective informed with their local investigation.

Detective Fosgren asked both Steve and Dennis to come down to the Sheriff's office where they would be more comfortable, since he wanted to question them extensively.

Steve and Dennis were individually questioned by the detective, and then all three of them talked informally, together, off-the-record, at greater length afterwards.

"So, what's your take on Patriot Corps and Mark Evanston?" asked Detective Fosgren, looking to Steve who had known Mark far longer than Dennis who was now also in the interrogation room.

Steve relayed his introduction to Mark years before, when Mark had began putting together seemingly unrelated jigsaw puzzle pieces which documented massive government deception to accumulate federal power into fewer and fewer hands for immense private gain.

"When my brother Randy and I were young, our father, a former Marine and current Sunday School teacher, instilled in us, as his father did in him, a strong sense of duty, honor and courage," Steve began. "We were taught to be truthful in all things, reliable, consistent, and to give important matters our full attention until the task at hand was completed.

"Coming of age in the 1970's, after Vietnam, neither Randy nor I were especially drawn to the military, but each of us had interest in law enforcement. We pursued our college degrees and then I went to the U.S. Marshals Service and Randy went to the Secret Service.

“My dad wasn’t surprised by our choices. He said Randy learned to protect and clear the way for the man carrying the football in high school while playing offensive guard, while I learned to chase after and catch that guy with the ball as he tried to move it downfield against our own end zone while I played defense.

“Randy and I moved up the corporate ladders at our respective agencies, but in time we both felt an emptiness which we couldn’t explain. We were on the right side, but our side wasn’t as honorable as either of us desired.

“Don’t get me wrong, we both respected the agencies where we worked, and the men and women working there are among the finest in the world, but yet there was a disturbing trend growing.

‘Our side’ didn’t always want to play by all the rules all of the time — actions long considered to be foul were now being authorized for us to use on an increasing basis.

“When Randy and I looked at the U.S. Constitution — which was the only thing we swore an oath to uphold — it too often seemed like our team, the executive branch of government, sometimes didn’t even read the same document.

“Randy and I both sensed that all was not right with America, that the principled America we had learned about in the history books and from our father was changing before our eyes, and hardly for the better.

“Then there was the sense of getting ahead even at the expense of one’s fellow Americans, grabbing from the public trough all that one could hope to grasp before it was gone.

“Again, don’t get me wrong, we and our fellow agents put our lives on the line every day, and we kept the truly bad guys at bay, so we should receive appropriate compensation commensurate with our effort and risk. But too often it seemed our side’s motivations differed precious little from the bad guys who seemed to use only slightly different means to grab everything they could for themselves.

“Well, one day I was assigned to interrogate this guy who had been picked up at the airport, to assess whether he was a threat to the United States.

“As I questioned this ordinary guy, I found my own mind had wandered back to my childhood, and an overwhelming sense of pride in my country, of boundless opportunity and unwavering righteousness, suddenly came over me.

“Mark Evanston was talking about his vision of America, an America which always, and he meant always, did the right thing, no matter the cost. A brave America which at all times defended honor, portrayed courage, and signified the best humans had to offer, but was still improving and becoming better and more consistent by implementing those principles in every action ever taken.

“Mark Evanston was an American lost out of time; a throwback to the late 1700’s when American government was being chained down in the newly-forged Constitution by men who understood firsthand how too much power in the wrong hands necessarily corrupted a nation.

“But then Mark talked about how a chink in America’s constitutional armor was discovered and exploited so those who controlled its reins could enrich themselves as they gutted the nation, not only of her untold wealth, but in the process also robbing her of the very principles under which she was founded.

“Mark Evanston detailed the deceitful manner by which government had been sidetracked so many generations ago. At first I didn’t really understand the things about what he talked, but I understood enough to realize that he had a unique take on things. Mark Evanston looked at the same circumstances as did others, but saw things differently, clearly, without the fog through which most of the rest of us looked.

Bare Liberty

“As I sat there listening to Mark, I thought back to the latest charge given me, to question this potentially dangerous man who may be a threat to our country and way of life. I realized that this man was a danger to the country America was becoming, but that this man was right to challenge it, the status quo, our present way of life.

“Evanston was trying desperately to wake up the crew charged with steering this ship which was headed straight for the rocky shore; he was a competent navigator who understood our present course would lead to our inevitable destruction.

“But even more importantly, he was discovering how our magnetic compass had been cleverly tampered with to read a direction other than magnetic North, how it had been altered to read a new direction with few people realizing that our compass was faulty. He was trying to get the crew and passengers to realize the impending doom of their present course so the compass could be reset back to the proper course.

“I became a true-believer, if you will, after realizing that my sworn oath was to support the Constitution and therefore America’s founding principles, rather than the current status quo which was working to subvert them.

“I realized that my underlying charge was the same as that given to supreme Court justices and every other high government official and member of Congress, which was to simply and always ‘support’ the Constitution. Thus I could not defer to those courts or anyone else my sworn responsibility to defend the Constitution; I must defend it, everyday, against every threat, foreign or domestic.

“And that duty, my sworn duty, is to support the Constitution, the whole thing — not just one clause. Thus, in a choice between a form of government which sought to operate under just one clause and the form of government which followed all the clauses, I must necessarily choose to support the latter, in every instance, every time.

“As I witnessed first-hand Mark’s transformation from a lowly dump truck driver with an odd passion for historical research to the man who was developing a vision that could finally Restore Our American Republic, I realized that I must work toward that same objective.

“I began studying Mark’s work to learn more about how government acted in all cases whatsoever with a power which had heretofore defied limitation. The more I read, the more I discovered and the more my fate became sealed before my very eyes.

“Even after I had just met him, however, I knew Mark’s work would make some very powerful people very unhappy with him, and that they would likely do everything under their extensive power to stop him, at least once they understood the danger Mark’s efforts presented to them and saw that those efforts were gaining ground.

“After Mark was kidnapped a short time later, I helped bring him back to safety, and I fully intend now to help Mark again, to now clear his good name.

“My oath to support the Constitution could not be better-fulfilled than in my present work. I want to help bring back Mark’s America, my father’s America, *my* America, before my son and any future grandsons of mine don’t have an America which they may rightfully call their own.”

“That’s quite the sales pitch, Marshal,” offered Detective Fosgren. “I haven’t heard anyone talk like that in decades — it’s quite refreshing, although cynics may scoff at such talk, calling it rather naïve and out-dated.”

“It is no longer ‘Marshal’, it’s just ‘mister’ now; I no longer have any formal affiliation to the U.S. Marshals Service,” answered Steve.

“Oh, I know,” replied the detective, “I was just throwing a little professional courtesy your way. I think that is all that I have for now, but I may have some questions after I review your body camera footage.”

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With Jamie Jeffers, Stan Bogelman, and Mike Holladay now all dead, the search for Adam Ramsey became more important. Although Steve hit pay dirt with Stan's taped confession before the latter was killed, a live participant-turned-informant who undoubtedly feared for his life would assuredly prove invaluable convincing a jury of the purposeful intent to frame Mark, who was still in jail awaiting trial.

With Mark's bail in the homicide case set during arraignment at \$500,000, it would take \$50,000 to pay a bail bondsman to keep Mark out of jail while he awaited trial, money which would be retained by the bonding company for their legal exposure for the full \$500,000 if he did not show up for trial.

It should be of little surprise that few Americans could ever afford to pay such large sums of money just to keep out of jail until trial, even though that could easily be a year or more away.

And it wasn't as if the Patriot Corps could assume such extravagant costs either, given that its income was plummeting and its reserve funds had already been shifted toward investigation and Mark's defense attorney.

Mark was thus confined, like many of his fellow inmates who suffered from his similar fate — not yet convicted of any crime, simply too poor to post bail as they awaited trial.

In other words, it was still highly advantageous to be wealthy if one was ever charged with a crime.

Of course, simply taking time to prove one's innocence still wasn't near as bad as when justice took a backseat to political ambition, when prosecutors cared more about their own conviction record than determining the actual guilt or innocence of the accused.

But Clark County was little different than other counties throughout the State and nation, with some 88% of all criminal prosecutions ending here in plea bargains with reduced sentences, the option with known parameters and quicker resolution.

Of the remainder, another nine percent of cases are dismissed, with less than three percent ever going to trial.

Being allowed a public defender under the constitutionally-guaranteed right of assistance of counsel is of great benefit, but often of insufficient comfort as high bail and slow legal processes all weigh heavily against those people charged with a crime, regardless of actual guilt.

But jailhouse matters are of little interest to most conservatives, who typically view law as being far too soft on alleged criminals.

This is one area where Mark did not necessarily agree with his fellow co-patriots, not that he was at all sympathetic towards crime or the criminals who allegedly perpetrated it.

No, Mark instead saw it as rather hypocritical to aggressively pursue the easiest-picking, petty criminals while the biggest threats to American liberty and prosperity were left undisturbed in their lavish high-rise office towers as they used the guns of government to disarm and plunder their victims to an exponentially-greater extent, without ever any fear of incarceration themselves.

Mark simply believed law-abiding Americans first had the moral duty to see that law itself did not go about creating victims in the first place; that patriotic Americans shouldn't allow government to maintain its own criminal monopoly while it seeks to punish petty, third-rate criminals who collectively couldn't do a fraction of the damage government itself created and perpetuated daily.

In a truly free America, it would be proper to hold all criminals accountable for their actions, especially those now considered above the law, since they caused far greater damage than ordinary offenders.

Whenever government went beyond providing for the general welfare and instead acted to provide for the specific welfare of one person or group at the expense of others, government became the ultimate tool for dividing Americans into different political classes, into victors and victims. Under this accepted form of government tyranny, government chooses who is allowed to reap while all others are left to sow.

Given such division which most Americans feel powerless to change, it should be of little surprise when victims seek to remove themselves from their apparent lot in life, figuring if they can't *beat 'em*, then they ought to *join 'em*.

Thus government-aided larceny encourages larceny even without government involvement, as those without political influence are left to succeed by their own efforts. It should not be surprising when some of those people choose to become victors in their own might, forcefully grabbing what they can, using their own guns to help ensure that they get something.

Of course such behavior cannot be condoned, but at least these would-be victors have sufficient honesty to refrain from asserting that they are doing it for the good of their victims. And, of course, their victims may legally fight off these aggressors, while much of what is taken can be insured against loss.

No, before Mark could ever seek to lock 'em all up and forever throw away the key, he thought it was necessary to go after the biggest offenders first, even though that which currently masqueraded as law protected them against us, even though 'law' protected these political victors against us political victims.

While passing time in jail, Mark thought back to 1997 when he first began working on his *Monetary Laws* book. He worked on Volume I, a narrative, to a small degree, but first he concentrated on Volume II, which were appendices containing the texts of America's monetary laws in one place for greater ease of study.

To compile these appendices, Mark photocopied all the monetary legislation he could find in the *Statutes at Large* at a nearby law library.

After taking the photocopies home, he typed them into his computer, since he wanted clearly-legible and searchable files and scanning just wouldn't work. Besides, typing every word of legislation better-ingrained within Mark a ready-familiarity of them.

While his work undoubtedly contained numerous typographical errors, he nevertheless meticulously typed them and carefully proof-read the legislation many times to help eliminate errors.

His accuracy was better than most, a skill learned from his earlier hobby of proof-reading various pocket-sized copies of the Constitution against his booklet which he proofed by painstakingly comparing it to posters which he obtained from the National Archives which had been created from copper-plate engravings made by direct impression upon the original documents.

Mark carefully scrutinized every letter, word, and punctuation mark in the various Constitution booklets sold and given away by different political groups; all of them, including several different copies issued by the government printing office at the direction of Congress, had some errors, while some had many.

One of Mark's motivating forces to have an accurate copy of the Constitution was his decision to memorize it; he certainly didn't want to memorize any errors. But rote memorization of the Constitution and Bill of Rights, even though it took several years to accomplish, benefitted Mark far more than he ever dreamed it would when he first began.

The primary benefit of rote memorization was the profound impact it had on his mind, of reinforcing a strict and literal interpretation of the Constitution — that the words originally chosen must have intentional, literal meaning which would not and could not vary over time and circumstance.

Bare Liberty

The inevitable conclusion of strict interpretation was to realize that the opposite was not even possible — the utterly false and severely dangerous idea that existing words could be given bold new meaning to change the powers actually granted American government.

Tragically, the accepted political thought in 20th- and 21st-century conservative America was that progressive supreme Court judges in precedent-setting legal cases provided bold new interpretations to existing words and phrases in the Constitution, justifying new government powers with official government sanction.

This conclusion took no leap of anyone's imagination to become accepted political thought; after all, judges in important early court cases asserted this very authority themselves as they offered twisted new meanings to existing words of the Constitution.

This claim of judicial supremacy could be traced primarily back to supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall, who famously asserted in his 1803 *Marbury v. Madison* ruling that it is “emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is.”

It was Marshall who also later famously asserted his bold new standard of allowable government action in the 1819 case of *McCulloch v. Maryland*, where he proclaimed:

“Let the end be legitimate, let it be within the scope of the constitution, and all means which are appropriate, which are plainly adapted to that end, which are not prohibited, but consist with the letter and spirit of the constitution, are constitutional.”

But Marshall's standard of allowable government action was not actually ‘new’; it was but a recycled variation of the Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton's deviant standard which Hamilton provided in his 1791 opinion on the constitutionality of the first bank of the United States, where he wrote:

“If the end be clearly comprehended within any of the specified powers, and if the measure have an obvious relation to that end, and is not forbidden by any particular provision of the Constitution, it may safely be deemed to come within the compass of the national authority.”

Sadly, over time, however, even the original limitations listed within these false ‘standards’ eased, to eventually become anything being allowed except that which was expressly prohibited. After all, it was the judiciary itself who was said to be the designated arbiter of the legitimacy of the ends, as well as the scope, letter, and spirit of the Constitution, so it was no wonder that court justices over time molded that Constitution to that of their own design.

But the Constitution is not meant to be molded by those officers who must swear an oath or give an affirmation that it is they who will support that Constitution. It is the Constitution which is fixed and which all officers and members of Congress must swear an oath or give an affirmation to support.

In these United States of America, it is decidedly *not* the officers who make the Constitution bow before *their* throne.

Neither is the Constitution silent on the important matter of allowed means to authorized ends; it clearly empowers members of Congress with only those means both “necessary and proper” for carrying into effect the enumerated powers which the Constitution delegates to those members.

With nearly 200 years of judicial re-interpretation since *McCulloch*, government-modification of the Constitution’s ‘necessary and proper’ means to allowed ends has devolved government into that wholly of its own discretion; one that may do anything except that which is expressly prohibited by the Constitution.

Perhaps without direct intention, Mark was at the forefront of a growing movement to re-cast the ‘necessary and proper’ clause back to its appropriate original scope, to narrow the Hamilton/Marshall ‘standard’ of allowed American tyranny back to its proper ten-miles-square geographic scope.

It was Hamilton himself who admitted the loophole under which his special form of government could operate, although he did his best to hide it within his lengthy 1791 banking opinion where he also discussed many irrelevant issues to provide necessary cover for his primary admission.

Hamilton’s opinion on the constitutionality of the first bank of the United States was of extreme importance, because that is the only place where Mark Evanston knew where the proponents of omnipotent government power actually, but of course circuitously, admitted the exact mechanism by which they were acting.

Mark noted that it was not mere coincidence that both of the two important opinions which dealt with the constitutionality of the banks of the United States — the 1819 supreme Court case of *McCulloch v. Maryland* which dealt with the constitutionality of the second bank of the United States and Hamilton’s 1791 Secretary of the Treasury’s opinion on the constitutionality of the first bank of the United States, each actually rested their authority on Article I, Section 8, Clause 17, even though each of these opinions naturally attempted to imply otherwise.

It is important to further note that the important 1803 *Marbury v. Madison* case which firmly established the official government policy judicial review also dealt with Clause 17.

Marbury, after all, was appointed to be a local Justice of the Peace, under President John Adams, for *the District of Columbia*.

But the rules which government officials may apply in the government seat have nothing necessarily to do with the rules which government officials may apply for the whole country.

Thus any principles the government may apply in *Marbury* and *McCulloch* do not necessarily apply beyond the pertinent local jurisdiction of the case which only involved the District of Columbia.

Besides, as the 11th Amendment clearly shows, the Constitution is what the *States* hold it to be, not the supreme Court.

It must not be over-looked that the 11th Amendment specifically over-turned the holding of a 1793 supreme Court case, *Chisholm v. Georgia*, after all. If the supreme Court was to truly have the last word on the Constitution, then nothing else could over-rule them.

It wasn't therefore that the words "necessary and proper" were actually given bold new meanings as Marshall cleverly implied in *McCulloch*, but simply an admission that Clause 18 and the remainder of the Constitution *have nothing legally to do with Clause 17* when Congress legislates exclusively in the government seat.

The simple fact is that Congress may erect a bank under their enumerated power to act "in all Cases whatsoever" for the government seat; any implied re-interpretation of the words "necessary and proper" is not only unnecessary, but wholly superfluous, except for devious intentions to help cover the trail.

Neither is it any surprise that the 1871 *Legal Tender* Court also necessarily looked to Clause 17 for constitutional support, such as when it expressly pointed to *McCulloch v. Maryland* for authority.

Most telling of all was the justification for paper currencies in the *Legal Tender Cases* by reference to the 1790 and 1825 criminal jurisdiction Acts of Congress. In these Acts, Congress provided for the punishment of crimes beyond those mentioned in the Constitution, but only as long the crimes were committed in forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards, or other places or district of country, under the sole and exclusive jurisdiction of the United States.

The bottom line is that members of Congress and government officers can only go beyond their delegated powers for the whole country when they legislate for exclusive legislative jurisdictions.

Bare Liberty

What government may legally do in the government seat and federal enclaves has nothing to do with the limited extent of its powers the government may only exercise for the whole country; such standards between these two different legal jurisdictions are as different as the night is from the day, as different as limited government is from despotic tyranny.

The Seat of Government of the United States was created out of States for the primary purpose to remove State involvement from the daily affairs of the U.S. Government.

Unlike State governments which look to their own respective State Constitutions for primary authority of which powers they may exercise within their boundaries, Congress and the U.S. government however have no similar framework whatsoever like a State Constitution to precisely know which State-like powers the federal government may actually exercise in the district constituted as the seat of government of the United States.

Therefore it is perhaps proper — in the government seat — for the supreme Court to be the final arbiter of what is there constitutional, as Marshall asserted in *Marbury v. Madison* and *McCulloch v. Maryland*. After all, this area was removed from the States so that the federal government could specifically control this federal enclave *without State interference*.

The claim of judicial reinterpretation of existing words of the Constitution to justify bold new powers for the whole country — with twisted new meanings for the general welfare clause, the necessary and proper clause, the commerce clause, the Supremacy clause or other of the Constitution's words and phrases — is another matter entirely, however.

The remainder of the Constitution beyond Clause 17 is the clear and consistent framework which details the federal actions allowable for exercising throughout the whole country, while also saying a thing or two about what the States can no longer do.

Judicial reinterpretation of the Constitution for the whole country rests upon the preposterous theory that the judicial branch of government — one of the three branches of government created by the Constitution — is the designated arbiter of the full meaning of the whole of the Constitution.

In other words, this theory of judicial preeminence rests upon the false premise that one of the ‘created’ — in this case the judicial branch of government — was and is greater than its ‘creator’, the Constitution.

This flawed theory consists of the created being able to redefine itself and the other branches by simply changing the meanings of words of the Constitution, to mean anything desired.

In other words, this incongruent theory rests upon the premise that while the creator was sufficient and even necessary to create, that after the original act of creation, that this creator may be discarded.

But one has to ask oneself, if the created somehow became so powerful, able to give the creator new meaning, then why does the created ever again point back to the creator, as if it still had continued relevance and effect?

If the creator still had effect, such that continued reference back to it was yet needed, then the created simply could NOT do as professed. This in turn provides compelling evidence that something else is in fact occurring to condone government action contrary to the spirit of the Constitution.

As is often the case of American government despotism, preposterous and contradictory assertions are opposite to that actually found in fundamental principles of American government.

Judicial reinterpretation of existing words with bold new meanings was not and could not ever allow government to act despotically any way it chose; any government so powerful as to be able to change the meanings of words obviously couldn’t ever be limited by mere words.

Bare Liberty

Such a government could simply do as it pleased and simple words from ancient and obsolete documents would be powerless against it, *such that no reference back to them would ever again be necessary.*

If the government is able to change the Constitution by re-interpretation of existing words a little bit, then it is able to change it a lot. And if the Constitution no longer has any fixed meaning, then none of it has any further relevance.

But if any ongoing actions of the Constitution are still yet necessary — such as the election of new Senators, Representatives, Presidents and Vice-Presidents — then all of it still has effect.

If the created branches of government have the power claimed, members of Congress could, for example, creatively give a bold new meaning for a (political) ‘year’ to be thereafter equivalent in length to a (four-year) ‘leap-year’. This would allow Representatives eight non-political years before re-election, and Senators twenty-four.

Or the President could ‘creatively’ use his enumerated power to adjourn the Congress in Article II, Section 3 “to such time as he thought proper” — say the year 2036 — and rule absolutely in their absence until then.

If words have no fixed meaning, the President would not even need to point to any ‘disagreement’ between the Senate and House regarding the proper time for adjournment.

Of course these hypothetical scenarios still refer back to the Constitution. But if the Constitution can be changed by government action, then government officials could also wholly ignore it with impunity, and they could all decide simply to stay in power for the remainder of their lives and no one else could do anything to stop them outside of sheer force.

Such scenarios have as much plausibility as any other preposterous theory of reinterpretation of existing words of the Constitution with bold new meaning.

If the creations of government have the power to redefine words to give themselves a little power, then they have the power to redefine words to give themselves unlimited power.

But this is simply another way of saying that once words no longer have fixed meaning, that they no longer have *any* meaning whatsoever and that words are therefore and thereafter irrelevant, *leaving only unrestricted power in its place.*

In other words, judicial reinterpretation of existing words of the Constitution with bold new meaning is merely all for show, to give a false nod toward actual authority *which was not here actually being referenced.*

Such actions are merely to keep the audience distracted, to keep the audience from discovering the true source of the actual power resorted to, which rests solely upon one clause of the Constitution, a clause wholly unlike all other clauses.

And the corollary of all similar assertions are also equally inaccurate; for instance, that claims by conservatives that various legislative acts and/or their supportive court rulings in apparent disagreement with the Constitution were actually ‘unconstitutional’. However, the courts time and again ruled precisely the opposite, that even the most preposterous acts of Congress were in fact constitutional.

But the real trick is discovered once one realizes that bold court rulings and preposterous government actions weren’t actually *ever* based upon brash new meanings given to obsolete words and phrases of the Constitution, *but were merely authorized by one constitutional loophole*, by Article I, Section 8, Clause 17, for the government seat.

What Mark found so incredible was that conservative Americans were so darn gullible; alleging that the court isn’t trustworthy, but then readily believing hook, line and sinker court assertions which readily prove time and again, *that it cannot be trusted at face value.*

Bare Liberty

Instead it is necessary to examine their rulings by reading between the lines, as Mark showed in his examination into the 1871 *Legal Tender Cases* ruling in his *Patriot Quest* and *Monetary Law* books.

Mark found it rather odd that conservatives asserted that their opponents were utter scoundrels but then wholeheartedly believed the intended meaning of every court opinion ever offered, without question, without proper examination into the real meanings.

Obviously, if American history proved anything, it was that supreme Court justices, like villains, crooks and thieves, should never be trusted, certainly at face value, without at least reading between the lines for the implied meaning cleverly disguised by brilliant and devious legal minds.

The proper and inevitable conclusion for absurd interpretations of the Constitution were that such offered meanings were merely clever side-show tricks by master-magicians trying to lure the public away from a true understanding of what was actually occurring.

In other words, the magician's sleight-of-hand caused naïve strict constructionists sufficient confusion such that they were never able to see the big picture of what was transpiring before their very eyes.

To learn about how the judiciary supported tyranny, Mark didn't study court opinions as much as he first studied the legislative Acts of Congress on a particular topic over time.

Mark's preferred topic for in-depth study was the Article I, Section 8, Clause 5 power of Congress "To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix a Standard of Weights and Measures", working diligently to 'follow the money'.

By examining all the legislative Acts of Congress on this subject since government began under the Constitution in 1789, Mark came to understand the meaning of the words of Clause 5 quite well.

By studying the monetary Acts chronologically, it was then easier to pin-point the specific piece of legislation which first altered the traditional and historical course of Congress on this topic.

Only then did Mark examine relevant court cases dealing with that change. This course of action was even more helpful when the courts first denied the new power but then later upheld it, as was the case of legal tender paper currencies, where three important supreme Court rulings first denied paper as legal tender.

Volume I of *Monetary Laws* sought to make sense of this legal tender nonsense, Volume II was divided into different appendices; primary coinage Acts, secondary coinage Acts, foreign coinage Acts, early and modern commemorative coinage Acts, Acts regarding mints and assay offices, Acts regarding notes, criminal monetary jurisdiction Acts, and then the Acts, resolutions, orders, and proclamations dealing with so-called gold 'confiscation' and finally the monetary portions of Title 31 of the United States Code.

In Volume II there was also a chapter containing some of the preliminary coinage reports written by Jefferson, Hamilton, and others such as Superintendent of the Finance under the Articles of Confederation, Robert Morris. The reports provided those author's thoughts about the appropriate monetary unit, setting up a coinage mint and beginning the coining of American money.

Mark continued working on this project for many years, but then the terrorists' attacks on 9/11/2001 occurred, and the mood of the country changed.

In the patriotic fervor resulting from defending our country from direct terrorist attack, Mark no longer thought the timing was right for his book which would necessarily examine underhanded government tactics meant to subvert our Constitution for the benefit of a relative few.

Thus after 9/11, Mark put his *Monetary Laws* project temporarily on hold and switched gears, beginning to write a constitutional-studies newsletter, *The Beacon of Liberty*. This would be a several-decade project to provide a structured curriculum of constitutional study, going through the Constitution clause-by-clause, looking into the early Acts of Congress to show how legislative Acts were written under the constitutional clause being discussed, to expound upon and understand that power.

Mark wrote an eight-page issue every month for the next 33 months, until his paying job changed such that continuing to write the newsletter on his personal time became all-but-impossible. The rest of the issues would have to wait until he could get back to that project, the completed issues being posted at the PatriotCorps.org website.

Studying the legislative Acts of Congress from 1789 up to the Civil War — the period of time before government began radically changing — allowed readers to best understand the Constitution as a whole before it ‘changed’ significantly. In this way readers could learn the historic ‘normal’ before things became too ‘abnormal’.

Looking at this early 70-year legislative window to learn what laws enacted under each clause looked like, seemed to be a better approach for learning the Constitution as a whole than the method pursued by most law schools.

Law schools typically began immediate examination of precedent-setting court cases, to see how revered court justices ruled from on high as to what the Constitution thereafter meant.

But without ever learning the Constitution from a consistent historical perspective, however, law students necessarily had to attempt to track a constantly-moving target. This ‘progressive’ approach inherently reinforced the concept of an ever-changing Constitution; sadly law students never learned the ‘normal’ before they ever learned what should really be considered ‘abnormal’.

This practiced legal approach would be like medical students skipping all their anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, and microbiology courses and jumping straight into pathology, simply because disease and injury cause so much change in and to the human body.

But unlike attorneys, health care practitioners realize that change is not necessarily for the better; that there is a healthy 'normal' toward which they should constantly strive, even if there happens to be some persistent changes brought on by disease and injury in individual cases which cannot be corrected or reversed.

But in law, arguing that there are fundamental principles which serve as invaluable and invariable barriers to inappropriate government action is taken by progressives as an unsuitable anchor keeping them from arriving at their brave new frontier, absolute political tyranny.

Besides, if law was consistent, there would be a whole lot less need for new lawyers and the remainder would probably earn a whole lot less money.

Mark would argue that lawyers need to know the Supreme Law of the Land from its proper historical context every bit as much as a doctor needs to know the proper structure and function of the normal body before learning about how disease or injury later affects it.

By first knowing well the normal, even in law, it is thereafter much easier to tell when and where something became abnormal.

This timing in turn provides clues for remedying the abnormality, rather than learning to live with political disease and injury, especially those progressive conditions which metastasize and eventually threaten the host.

After Mark became over-extended and lost his business in 2009 during the economic downturn, he knew the timing was right to resume his *Monetary Laws* project, which he was able to complete in 2012.

But to most Americans, *Monetary Laws* would read too much as a dry textbook which examined the primary monetary Acts and legislative actions in chronological order, examining methodically how monetary issues were dealt with properly at first but then later deteriorated over time.

Finding himself now in jail, Mark began contemplating writing a book which examined America's laws from a slightly different perspective, easier for most people to understand.

He roughed out an outline, beginning with Chapter 1 which would first clearly prove to Americans who no longer knew any better that America's constitutionally-authorized legal tender money for the whole country consists of *only* gold and silver coin, period.

He would back up that assertion with the various monetary Acts of Congress, which in their strict adherence of such principles clearly proved them, time and again. The second chapter would look into the historical feud between Jefferson's agrarian followers who favored limited government and honest money against Hamilton's strong central government proponents who handed out political favors to their supporters, especially the central bankers with their paper currencies.

The third chapter would show how the government cleverly instituted legal tender paper currencies during the disruptive Civil War era and how the courts cleverly upheld this newfound authority.

This third chapter was much of the same information found in *Patriot Quest*; but here Mark would expound on things to a greater degree and cover additional information.

Mark's latest goal was thus to write a book in-between his 90-page *Patriot Quest* and his earlier 360-page *Monetary Laws* book, thereby giving readers a lighter-reading option, a middle ground, and a more thorough version, each of which would examine the same issue from a slightly different tack and in differing intensities. He would recommend readers to read the lightest version first, and then proceed through the others as they were able or willing, for better reinforcing and more thoroughly explaining America's fundamental monetary principles.

Mark decided to call the middle-option book, *Dollars and nonCents*.

In the fourth chapter of *Dollars and nonCents*, he would cover Roosevelt's 1933 gold 'confiscation', although again to a lighter degree than covered in *Monetary Laws*. The fifth chapter would cover his recommended Once and For All Amendment as found in *Patriot Quest* but which he hadn't yet formulated when *Monetary Laws* was completed.

The sixth chapter would look into options an individual could arguably perform, while the seventh would look at things from a State perspective. The eighth chapter would be a short chapter on federal action. The ninth chapter would complete the book, summarizing the topic at hand.

Mark looked up from his cell as the lunch carts were brought before the food slot for the whole jail pod. He was never one for cafeteria food, but he didn't here really have an option to bring his own lunch with him now as he always had done at school and at work.

Although jail was a new experience, the primary matter of adjusting to it was getting accustomed to its simple routine. If one could accept unchanging monotony, everything else which remained was of less real consequence.

Bare Liberty

The jailers and the physical layout of the jail kept things in proper order, so there wasn't really much to fear. Some rougher human elements were definitely found in jail, but working in construction as long as he did, it wasn't as if Mark hadn't already been exposed to some degree of it already.

While confinement was the opposite of freedom Mark had always supported in spirit and in his writings, his writing had always necessarily kept him stationary and virtually locked in his own mind anyway. Thus writing while in jail wasn't all that much different than writing in the outside world, other than missing a few modern tools.

But incarceration also removed much of the distraction of the outside world, such that Mark could concentrate his efforts on his work and get a great deal of work done in short order.

Being increasingly hard of hearing gave Mark a head-start on ignoring the surrounding noise in jail, and any noise beyond that was easily taken care of by ear plugs, even if those consisted only of rolled-up toilet paper.

With paper and pen in hand from the commissary, Mark had much of what he needed, as he had much of what he needed to write in his mind, even if he would later need someone else to fill in any needed quotes from outside reference books.

Without the aid of a computer with efficient cut and paste features, Mark's writing and editing consisted of writing out pages on an old-fashioned physical notepad which pages could be torn off and placed in appropriate sequence, with lines striking out deleted words and phrases or, if a great deal of correction was needed, the page would be re-written.

Although this was far more time-consuming than if he had use of a computer, time was the one thing which he currently had plenty of at his ready disposal.

After lunch, Mark thought again back to the typical conservative American perspective on criminals; that America was much too soft on them. To the extent Mark could agree with that statement, he would first have to point to the criminals who were never held as such due to their extensive political clout, as government did all their dirty work for them.

If one were to add up the value of all the property crimes ever perpetrated on Americans by all those who have ever been convicted and imprisoned, it still may perhaps not add up to the value of all the gold that was 'confiscated' with F.D.R.'s guns just in 1933.

But even if the former greatly exceeded the latter, certainly the latter nevertheless caused far greater damage, as Americans since legal tender paper currencies were implemented have virtually become indentured servants to escalating debt, debts which cannot be paid since gold and silver are no longer found in active circulation.

Under our presently-used monetary system, there is never enough money to pay the interest bill due on debt at the end of the year, unless at least that much new 'money' has been additionally loaned into circulation.

Looked at another way, whenever our circulating money is found only in the form of 'notes', it is based on debt, meaning that it is in existence because someone took out a loan. In other words, the principal was loaned into circulation when the loan was granted.

The tragic truth of the matter is that the borrower only borrows the principal but is also later responsible for interest which is never separately loaned into circulation.

This practice of loaning into existence only the principal but never the interest necessarily means that there will only be enough money in existence to repay principal and interest if someone borrows even more money, itself incurring additional interest, leading evermore to ever-escalating debts.

Bare Liberty

Such practices amount to the constant relative shortage of paper money, *even during an era of rapid hyperinflation*.

There is only money to the extent there is debt, and if there is no debt then there is no money. And when people pay down debts but do not borrow more money, the monetary supply evaporates exponentially in reverse.

Ever-rising, perpetual debts or a monetary collapse result, neither which offer pleasant repercussions.

While debts can be transferred amongst the participants along the way, they cannot actually ever be paid off as a whole, at least until some unknown judgment day when something else must necessarily occur.

And what that ‘something else’ can or will be is of crucial importance to try and comprehend.

As Mark would show in *Dollars and nonCents*, America’s only legal tender money for the whole country under the U.S. Constitution can only be gold and silver coins, which are not liabilities, but real assets. These assets are based upon production, rather than on monopoly control of future promises to pay which may fail to materialize.

But Americans in 2015 don’t realize the Constitution’s monetary mandates because in 1871 the supreme Court upheld paper currencies as legal tender, but in actuality only under the authority for the district constituted as the seat of government of the United States, and then only in exigent circumstances and really only for as long as emergency-like conditions lasted.

But the 1871 court case is also important because it shows that, in the end, that government must necessarily pay its creditors in real dollars of gold or silver, as he would show in *Dollars and nonCents*.

To accurately understand the Great American Paper Currency Debate, one must realize that the government requirement to eventually pay its debts in real money, in real dollars of gold, has never been legally waived or rescinded, at least certainly for everyone.

This conclusion was at least indirectly admitted in the concurring opinion of supreme Court associate Justice Joseph P. Bradley in the same 1871 *Legal Tender Cases* court ruling which first upheld legal tender paper currency. Justice Bradley went so far as to clearly say, with the emphasis his own:

“No one supposed that these government certificates are never to be paid — that the day of specie payments is never to return...Through whatever changes they may pass, their ultimate destiny is *to be paid*.”

To be fair, Bradley was talking specifically about ‘United States notes’ — U.S. government-issued notes which were redeemable in dollars which at that time necessarily meant gold and silver coin, but which specie-redemption quality was temporarily suspended because of the Civil War.

But the 1871 court could only uphold the legal tender nature quality of these notes because they were true promises to pay in gold coin or silver dollars *at least someday*. If not for true promises to someday pay in gold or silver coin, the court could not have upheld the legal tender nature of the paper currency.

Thus the only way paper currencies were actually allowed (but only for the District of Columbia) by the supreme Court was because in these notes the U.S. government solemnly promised to pay to the bearer gold or silver coin for the inevitable redemption of that paper currency, because the promise that government would one day pay off its creditors in true money was as good as gold.

In response to such a novel assertion that government must eventually (still) pay its debts in gold, government apologists in 2015 would undoubtedly point to the 1933-34 separation of the dollar from gold.

Bare Liberty

Supporters of government tyranny would likely argue that these 1933-34 government actions invalidated the 1871 court opinion which required government to eventually pay its debts in gold.

But such an argument also proves premature and inaccurate upon a closer examination.

Step One of the wealth transfer process to a favored few was the 1862 issuance of the first legal tender paper currencies, becoming legal tender alongside gold and silver coin. Phase Two could not be implemented until Phase I was in place and widely readily accepted; i.e., once paper currency acceptance became commonplace.

Step Two was the 1933 prohibition of gold ownership nominally by all persons except in a few limited cases, such as \$100 of gold allowed per person or exempting numismatically-important coins.

This second step readily-separated Americans into distinct classes, of a preferred victor class over the disfavored victim class, even if the victor class wasn't initially readily identifiable at that time.

The real kicker was that government never actually did prohibit anyone from owning gold, nor did government ever really repudiate paying its debts in gold, certainly not overtly to everyone.

Thus, appearances — or more accurately — misperceptions, again allowed Congress and the U.S. government to have its cake and eat it too, to supposedly outlaw private gold ownership but yet continue to allow paper currencies which had only been upheld in court because they promised (eventual) redemption in gold.

And appearances were rather deceiving; the appearance of gold repudiation looked complete, such that now many decades later few Americans ever question that it happened.

Besides F.D.R.'s April 5, 1933 executive order which appeared to confiscate all gold from all persons, there was the June 5, 1933 joint resolution of Congress which appeared to prohibit gold clauses in contracts, clauses which required repayment in gold coin.

But close examination of this resolution as shown in Mark's books was that it mostly provided government creditors notice that government would thereafter offer payment only in paper; that if one wanted to do business with the government, that they would have to accept paper (and if the government found no takers, then it would probably have to reconsider its stance).

And Section 5 of the Gold Reserve Act of January 30, 1934 appeared to prohibit gold from thereafter being coined by the mint, while also providing that "no gold coin shall hereafter be paid out or delivered by the United States," but melted into bars and kept within government vaults.

But then one comes across Section 2 of that same January 30, 1934 Gold Reserve Act, showing that the U.S. government paid — *in Gold Certificates* — to the 12 Federal Reserve banks, for all the gold coin and gold bullion the banks had helped collect from Americans in 1933.

These were the *same* Gold Certificates which were already supposedly prohibited to all 'persons', i.e., nominally to all individuals, to all partnerships, to all associations, and to all corporations.

And to rub more salt in the wound of the average American, Section 6 of that 1934 Act detailed how the "Gold Certificates *owned* by the Federal Reserve banks" could thereafter be "redeemed" *in the future*.

This section provided how these certificates could be thereafter redeemed by the Federal Reserve banks "*in gold bullion* bearing the stamp of a United States mint or assay office in an amount equivalent at the time of redemption to the currency surrendered. "

With such legislation, the identity of the victor class was becoming more apparent, the shareholders of the 12 major Federal Reserve banks, even if such benefits didn't trickle down to the many thousands of minor member banks of the Federal Reserve System.

Sadly, however, this was still not the extent to which the 12 Federal Reserve banks held special government favor. Two generations later, things really kicked up another notch.

Thus, Step Three of the conversion of government assets into a few privileged hands was the closing of ‘the gold window’ in 1971 by President Richard Milhous Nixon, which thereafter temporarily denied even foreign central banks the continued ability to redeem their foreign-held American Federal Reserve note dollars for gold from the U.S. Treasury.

This action supposedly removed the last vestiges of a tether to gold of the U.S. government dollar, at least temporarily, thereafter (temporarily) allowing the dollar to ‘float’ in value as it related to gold, at least for everyone but those shareholders of the 12 Federal Reserve banks.

With the last vestiges of the dollar’s tie to gold (temporarily) removed in 1971, the value of the dollar was allowed to ‘float’ on the market, such that in 2015 it takes some 1,200 of these Federal Reserve notes to buy one ounce of pure gold on the market.

But then *after* the 1971 closing of the gold window, there is March 31, 1972 Par Value Modification Act, which pegged the U.S. dollar to equal one-thirty-eighth of an ounce of gold, for the express purpose of providing “the legal standard for defining the relationship of the dollar to gold for the purpose of issuing gold certificates pursuant to section 14(c) of the Gold Reserve Act of 1934.”

So, just as the Gold Reserve Act of 1934 provided explicit payment *in Gold Certificates* to banks for their gold coin and bullion *even after Roosevelt’s 1933 confiscation of gold coin, gold bullion and Gold Certificates from “all persons”*, in 1972 the 1972 Par Value Modification Act re-confirms the banks’ ability to be paid in Gold Certificates with gold fixed at \$38.00 an ounce, *even after the dollar had been supposedly severed from its last remaining tie to gold in 1971*.

But the true benefit of all this American monetary debasement boils down to one final fact. Even today, in 2015, anyone can verify that the U.S. government still values all the gold held on the government books today not in dollars which ‘float’ in value according to market rates, but actually in dollars fixed in value where every 42.22 of them buys one ounce of pure gold, the rate established by the September 21, 1973 amendment to the Par Value Modification Act.

This fact can be verified at the treasury.gov website, after searching ‘gold status report’ and then dividing the book value into the number of troy ounces of gold being held in stock.

This double standard, of Congress and the U.S. government having their cake and eating it too, again offers troubling evidence that not all is right in America. Of course, the sad fact is that it is not even for the benefit of Congress and the U.S. government, but actually only to those few private persons who benefit from such troubling and deceitful federal actions.

The government’s double standard provides clear and compelling evidence of the improper creation of a victor class and the remaining victim class. The double standard is the hallmark of improper government action; it is the smoking gun which shows that government has clearly overstepped its proper legal bounds as it seeks to rob Peter to pay Paul.

And with that piece of information, one should finally begin to understand the vast and powerful incentive for the Federal Reserve banks to wildly inflate their currency emissions even when it should otherwise appear that doing so would be directly detrimental to their own cause; i.e., that they would later suffer financially as they were nominally paid back in greatly-devalued dollars.

But that later argument rests upon the premise that the Federal Reserve banks will ultimately be paid back *like everyone else* in those greatly-devalued dollars which are allowed to float on the gold market, to the extent gold is ever even brought into the picture.

Bare Liberty

But it is important to remember the 1871 court's concurring opinion:

“No one supposed that these government certificates are never to be paid — that the day of specie payments is never to return...Through whatever changes they may pass, their ultimate destiny is *to be paid*.”

With this important judicial admission, one must realize that although the Constitution won't let the U.S. government, even in the district constituted as the seat of government of the United States where the government can act in all cases whatsoever, emit paper currencies without eventual payment in gold, that doesn't mean that that the same Constitution would prevent any private party who can pull it off from doing the same.

One must realize that through all the monetary gyrations of the last 150 years, that the currency used by everyday Americans has been separated from government-backed securities held by the banking establishment which issues our currency.

While the American public holds non-redeemable Federal Reserve notes unbacked by anything, the Federal Reserve banks hold government securities which undoubtedly are still ultimately redeemable to the banks in gold, gold *at \$42.22 per ounce!*

The 1933-34 separation of government obligations from gold which affected everyday Americans did not at all affect the Federal Reserve banks, as both Section 2 of the 1933 executive order number 6102 and Section 2 (a) of the Gold Reserve Act of 1934 clearly show.

And the 1971 separation of the dollar from gold for foreign governments did not at all affect the Federal Reserve banks, as Section 2 of the 1972 Par Value Modification Act clearly shows.

The current 2015 valuation of government-held gold at the 1973 amendment to the Par Value Modification Act rate of \$42.22 per ounce which current gold status treasury reports show cannot be ignored.

And, importantly, President Nixon *temporarily* closed the gold window to *temporarily* sever the gold-to-dollar tie — meaning that one day that tie may perhaps be reconnected, at least for those same Federal Reserve banks which have long received special favor.

These historical facts point to a reasonable conclusion that U.S. government debts owed at least to the favored Federal Reserve banks *will someday be paid in dollars where every 42.22 of them equate with one ounce of gold!*

If that be the case, then stratospherically-escalating government debts finally makes rational sense; powerful government creditors have continued to loan the government money well past its ability to repay simply desire to get the government's debts owed to them as high as possible, certainly before any judgment day when these favored creditors are to be paid off in real money, *at low fixed rates in gold* apparently unavailable to all other parties.

While this scenario explains the current state of financial affairs from the creditor's viewpoint, why on earth would government officials ever agree to such short-sighted preferences?

The answer to that multi-trillion-dollar question is obviously for the decided benefit of government officials, to also enrich themselves along with their friends and supporters, so they can all enjoy the fruits of wealth and power, at least for as long as the game lasts.

Thus the real reason for the federally-chartered private Federal Reserve banks is simply to establish a private financial intermediary who may take in and hold government securities which must eventually be paid in gold while in turn passing out its own bank notes which are no longer redeemable in gold to the public.

This seemingly-convoluted exchange is made for a reason, which reason *is to sever the link between gold-backed government debt and the private, un-backed money used by a nation.*

The banks are *owed* gold by the government but *owe* the public only paper.

This mathematical equation for the wholesale transfer of American wealth to a privileged few was set into motion 150 years ago, which took from 1862 until 1971 to accomplish, with the last 40-plus years since then to allow that debt to grow exponentially.

The U.S. supreme Court has already acknowledged that the temporary suspension of an expressly-stated government gold redemption policy did not affect the legal nature of the gold-redemption notes issued by government, because ‘through whatever changes they may pass, their ultimate destiny is to be paid’, in specie, in gold.

Therefore, just as a temporary suspension of an expressly-stated gold redemption policy did not affect the legal nature of U.S. notes, the lack of an express admission of gold redemption on other government securities still *doesn't mean that such redemption cannot or will not someday be lawfully upheld and enforced*, at least for the same favored group which has already received preferential government treatment, the 12 Federal Reserve banks.

The banks will undoubtedly someday find all of the government debt they are owed have been reconnected in their tie to gold.

Such facts, taken together, point to the overwhelming political advantage granted to the 12 Federal Reserve banks and their shareholders.

The trap has been set; it just needs to be sprung. Not that there is even any reason to intentionally spring it; after all, collateral to the banks for their private loans is rapidly approaching nearly all private assets in existence. And banks surely do not want to actually work all those assets; they are plenty happy to leave all the real work to others. The banks merely want the equitable interest in assets, which they already own.

Perhaps the true benefit of government debt is to simply serve as an effective leverage tool, to keep the government from ever seeking to end the Federal Reserve banks' exclusive money-making monopoly, such as through exercising the government's explicitly reserved 'right' to repeal the Federal Reserve Act of 1913 by its Section 30.

Of course, any economic recession can get out of hand and cause an unintentional but not unknowable release of that spring causing a critical judgment day, which the 2007-2009 financial crisis came dangerously close.

Should a fateful judgment day come to pass, neither private industry nor government will have anywhere near enough dollars or gold to pay their debts owed to creditors.

And as debts are paid down, if there are no or too few new borrowers, monetary creation now works in reverse and most of it evaporates. Sure, if new loans are secured, it can again go through the multiplier effect, but if not, the paid-off debts cause a rapid monetary contraction, a severe domino effect.

The government will undoubtedly again stiff its private creditors who own government securities as government already did with domestic creditors in 1933 and with international creditors in 1971, again favoring only its preferred Federal Reserve bank shareholders.

And since government debt is so high, other assets beyond those directly collateralized are reached by the creditors as in any bankruptcy, especially those in favored first position.

Of course, financial upheaval in any one sector leads to upheaval in all sectors, thus all the pledged assets in the country would be up for grabs to the best-secured creditors, which amounts to the best-politically-connected creditors.

Expect to be on the settlement block some six hundred million acres of federal public lands scattered mostly throughout the western States, together with all the remainder of the U.S. government assets,

including the U.S. Capitol building, the White House and the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial. And don't forget, of course, the nation's aircraft carriers, fighter jets, and tanks, all being sold to the world's highest bidders.

And at that tragic time, nothing will be sacred and left for grabs, Murphy and his Golden Rule will beat out the Declaration of Independence which boldly declared that all men are created equal and endowed with unalienable rights which free governments are instituted to protect.

The United States began traversing down this destructive path charted by Alexander Hamilton in 1791, within two short years of the Constitution taking effect. In 1819, Chief Justice John Marshall established Hamilton's dangerous plan as regular government action.

In 1862 — under one of the most beloved of all American Presidents, first Republican President Abraham Lincoln — money improperly and deceptively became for the first time under the Constitution something other than gold and silver coin.

This path became increasingly dangerous in 1933 as Democratic President Franklin Delano Roosevelt continued to misuse this misunderstood power and authority as he omnipotently removed gold from domestic circulation, effectively denying Americans the fundamental right to own the most liquid form of property.

This path of self-destruction became downright scary in 1971 when Republican President Richard Milhous Nixon 'closed the gold window' to international payments, temporarily freeing the dollar from any direct tie to gold, at least for everyone but the Federal Reserve banks.

In a bid to see which political party could do more damage to the Constitution, although it was often a neck-in-neck race, the winner would have to be the Republicans, sadly the party with more philosophical ties to government which bestowed special favors upon the rich and powerful for mutual benefit.

Of course the Left-leaning Democratic Party would not lag far behind, bestowing special favors to the favored masses who could vote the incumbents back into power for their mutual benefit against everyone else.

The country chartered for individual liberty and widespread justice was deviously divided into the many victims and the relative few victors.

But the real sadness was that the victims never looked past a multitude of readily-apparent symptoms to discover their single underlying cause, instead blaming and fighting one another while the actual culprits laughed all the way to the bank.

These devious methods destined America for utter financial ruin, because we lost our way and gave up our fundamental principles before the shrine of omnipotent government which never met a power it didn't like.

The ever-patient shareholders of those 12 Federal Reserve banks are being rewarded for their patience and determination, as more of America's assets become circuitously collateralized than ever before.

No, Mark could never reconcile harsh treatment of common criminals while allowing the true offenders to make incomprehensible sums of money while enslaving the country with ever-escalating debt.

While Americans well-understand that something is wrong in America, they are wholly oblivious to the real cause. Taking out their fears on petty criminals or other mostly-innocuous parties such as illegal immigrants will not resolve their fears or return our country's honor, but it can help transform America into a police state.

But Mark also had a different view on harsh prison life because he figured that he'd invariably end up there someday, for violating any number of the thousands of laws on the books meant to keep people in line, laws available so that the government may protect itself from exposure of its true nature by the likes of people such as Mark Evanston.

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Janet Davidson's seminars were mostly cancelled due to lack of interest, especially where the overhead was higher, in out-of-town presentations which required airline flights and hotel stays. Local presentations were typically moved to smaller and less expensive venues adequate to seat the dwindling crowds.

She spent many of her days meeting with long-time donors who were yet willing to meet with her. She gave her listeners a detailed run-down of Mark's case and the faulty evidence against him, ending her message by showing an edited video footage of Stan Bogelman, fading to black to avoid showing his gruesome murder, but leaving the audio running, to let the listeners know the end result.

Janet began couching the Patriot Corps' work as war itself, where struggles of Good v. Evil, Right v. Wrong, Life v. Death, and Honor v. Dishonor all met daily on the tarmac and in the trenches.

Admitting to her listeners that Evil had amassed a spectacular amount of wealth and power, she admitted that its practitioners were surrounded by the appearance of an insurmountable wall of protection.

She told them that this extensive protection would likely remain until the final battles of the war when it would fall in one spectacular collapse, just like the final fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

Such events, Janet asserted, are seen on a much smaller scale in every government corruption scheme which had ever been exposed. Of course, the bigger the corruption scheme and the more extensive its ties, the more difficult it has proven to dismantle it.

Exposing government corruption necessarily takes a significant amount of fortitude on the part of a relatively small number of fearless participants who have much to lose.

These brave men and women fight corruption for the sake of doing what is right, working to break apart the well-greased political connection between the criminal underworld element and well-placed government officials which have allowed both parties to earn untold profits wholly impossible in any honest market.

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Steve Frederickson and Dennis Chen began concentrating their efforts on finding Adam Ramsey, digging through his past in hopes of finding his current whereabouts.

Penny and her daughter Bethany helped Steve track Bethany's former boyfriend. Bethany had long-before deleted Adam's photos from her phone, but she was able to obtain copies which she had originally sent to friends.

Their first big break in tracking Adam came after Bethany remembered that he had given her a wine glass memento after a memorable weekend spent together at an Idaho amusement park, which glass was put up in her cupboard and forgotten about.

Being careful not to get any more fingerprints on it, Steve put the glass in a cushioned bag and took it to a private lab in Portland where they were able to lift several prints, including those obviously from a larger hand, undoubtedly male.

Steve emailed the prints to a trusted colleague who yet worked at the U.S. Marshals Service, coming up with a hit from a junior financial license for Terry Runco, a.k.a., Adam Ramsey, a former financial advisor from New York City who lost his license after being convicted of helping run a drug-running and prostitution ring.

With that information, Steve contacted Janet in Washington, D.C. so she could oversee further investigation of Terry's past on the East Coast while he and Dennis would continue to follow the West Coast leads.

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Randy Frederickson and Jeff Roberts had been concentrating their efforts on finding Mark's sex-double and the photographer.

Randy and Jeff were getting nowhere until they went again to the same Vancouver hotel room which Jamie Jeffers had repeatedly reserved for her supposed sexual escapades with Mark.

With photographs in hand, Randy looked past Jamie's well-toned nude body and noticed that the lamps in the photo on the nightstands on either side of the bed were slightly different from the lamps in the room.

With that discovery came the realization that the hotel room which Steve and Dennis were in wasn't the same hotel room where the photos actually took place.

Now knowing what to now look for, they noticed several other discrepancies as well.

The pictures showed variations in the sheetrock texture above the bed where a wall repair had been performed at some point in the past, but the Vancouver room showed no such variation in texture in the same place.

The baseboard profile differed between the photo and the room, and the curtain rod above the window was half the distance between the top of the window and the ceiling in the photograph, but nearly touching the ceiling in the Vancouver room.

Randy confirmed with the hotel manager that none of the local hotel's lamps were the same as shown in the picture, helping confirm that the photos weren't taken in the Vancouver hotel.

Randy checked with the Patriot Corps and noticed Jamie had taken a week's vacation in November, and surmised that since she had rented the same local hotel room repeatedly between November 16th and December 5th, that the sex photos were likely taken during her 'vacation' somewhere else.

Randy looked through copies of Jamie's receipts to which they had access, but there weren't any expenses during the first half of November which would have indicated that she had been out of town. Either she paid cash or someone else paid her expenses, obviously making it tougher to discover where she had been.

Randy and Steve weren't able to check to see if any airline reservations were found in her name, as they had already used up any favors to which they could be nominally considered to have been owed.

They also weren't able to look at Jamie's cell phone records.

Randy and Steve thus made an appointment with Detective Bobby Fosgren Friday afternoon and provided him a report on their latest findings and thoughts, as they had promised the detective to keep him filled in with their separate investigation.

Such reports kept them within the detective's good graces and kept themselves from being charged with interfering with an official investigation.

"I'm afraid I have some bad news, Steve," Detective Fosgren began. "You know your body cameras the city police took from you and your partner after Stan Bogelman's death? Well, they're both blank, meaning either they were never turned on or they were apparently wiped clean."

“So you never viewed the footage which was on the cameras that we taped?” asked Steve.

“No,” answered Detective Fosgren. “And no one at the police station admits to touching the cameras after they were logged into evidence.”

“I hope you’re beginning to understand what we’re all up against, and the degree which those who wish to see Mark Evanston convicted of the murder of Jamie Jeffers will go to get that conviction, apparently even including infiltrating the local police precinct,” Steve replied.

“Perhaps, but I also hold out the prospect that Stan’s confession didn’t ever happen, that you never had anything on tape or that you erased it yourself, or maybe even that you killed Stan and Mike to protect your boss from eye-witness testimony of his affair,” offered the detective.

“Wearing body cameras would make little sense if one wanted to engage in criminal activity as you suggest,” Steve offered in a rational manner. “I guess it’s a good thing I downloaded Stan’s confession and murder and emailed the files out to a few colleagues for safekeeping.”

“You did?” asked an inquisitive Detective Fosgren.

“Yes,” said Steve.

“Normally I’d be quite upset at you for holding back information, but in this case I want to see that tape; will you please email it to me?” asked Detective Fosgren.

“I didn’t hold back any information. No one ever asked me if I made any copies, the originals being confiscated by city police as they confiscated my camera, I must add. I saw no reason to volunteer that I had made copies, until now,” replied Steve, grabbing his phone. “If you give me your email address again, though, I’ll email the files to you as an attachment right now.”

Getting the email, Detective Fosgren said that after viewing the tape he'd look into Jamie's phone records and airline reservations to see if he could narrow down where she may have gone the week of November 9th, although he didn't make them any promises.

The next morning, Saturday, Detective Fosgren called Steve on his cell phone and began talking in circles without saying much of anything, other than mentioning that he was thinking about taking a trip to San Diego to enjoy the nice weather.

Ending the phone call moments later, Steve relayed the message to his brother Randy, who made arrangements with Jeff Roberts for both of them to fly to San Diego later that day, to pursue the hotel lead which Detective Fosgren circuitously gave Steve.

Randy mapped out the hotel chain's San Diego-area hotels that he would canvas to see if Jamie had been to any of them.

At the second hotel at which they stopped on Sunday, a hotel which they later found out had been built at the same time as the Vancouver location, Randy and Jeff again showed hotel staff Jamie and Mark's restaurant photo.

Randy used the restaurant photo, as he didn't want to show the explicit photographs to scores of people who hadn't seen Jamie. He did caution viewers however that the man they were looking for may have actually looked slightly different than the man in the picture.

As customary, they slipped those willing to look at the photograph a small gratuity for their effort, even if they were of no direct help. Today, however, the waiter who served the pool area asked if they had more pictures, because although the gal looked familiar, she seemed a little too formal to place her for sure.

Randy pulled out one of the least-revealing of the sex scene photos which still clearly showed Jamie's face and provided a glimpse of Mark's double.

“Yes, now that’s the woman I remember,” said the waiter. “She was not anywhere nearly as ‘buttoned-up’ and formal as your first picture. “In that picture, she looks like a librarian, but the woman I saw acted like no librarian I’ve ever met.

“She flirted a lot, saying she was on vacation from work which to her had seemed like working at a convent. I overheard her flirting with one male guest, saying she had month’s-worth of pent-up sexual drive stored up for him.

“She wore a string bikini around the pool; well, at least most of the time. Two of our night staff got fired after our manager happened to notice one of the security officers viewing and reviewing her late-night skinny-dipping scene in the pool. It wasn’t the security officer who got fired though, but the two hotel staff members who opened up the locked pool enclosure and went in buck naked with her. They may not have even got fired if they had left well-enough alone, but the footage of them having sex with her in the hot tub definitely did them in.

“I also saw a guy with her on occasion, who looked a little like your guy in your photo, but perhaps a little younger and thinner. I didn’t see him much, maybe only once or twice, so I’m not so sure it was him. Whoever he was, though, he was much more reserved and far less memorable than this gal.”

“Thanks, you’ve been a huge help,” responded Randy, as he slipped the waiter a large tip. “You didn’t notice anyone else around the woman, perhaps taking pictures of her, by chance, did you?”

“Sorry, can’t say that I did,” replied the waiter, who thanked Randy for the tip and turned to get back to his other customers.

“Steve, we’ve found our hotel; it’s in San Diego,” Randy relayed to Steve after he had answered his call. “A waiter saw Jamie by the pool on several occasions, and once or twice a man that kind of looked like Mark, but perhaps younger and thinner. We’ll start digging deeper.

“At the onset, I thought that finding this hotel would be kind of like finding a needle in a haystack,” Randy continued. “But now I feel that we’re fast closing in on Mark’s double, even if we’re still a ways from putting a face or name on the photographer.”

“Great work, Randy; keep me informed,” said Steve, “and be careful.”

Randy and Jeff continued to search the area around the hotel, including restaurants and bars. No one recognized Mark’s double who evidently wasn’t all that memorable, although a couple of people recognized the clearly-memorable Jamie.

On the third day of looking for Mark’s double but coming up with no solid leads, a realization came to Randy.

“You know,” Randy began, as he talked with Jeff, “Jamie Jeffers, Stan Bogelman and Mike Holladay were involved in Mark’s framing and they are all now dead. I hadn’t really thought about it much, but maybe this sex double is also now dead.

“If he is dead, he has died recently, although maybe as far back as November 9th, which is a pretty small window. We should check the local death records.

“That sounds quite reasonable,” replied Jeff, as he began looking up death notices in the local newspaper’s website for a male in his 40’s or 50’s which could fit Mark’s general description, dying since November 9th.

Many of the obituaries had photographs and they could be quickly ruled out. But the internet and social media were a big help on most of the remainder without photographs.

After an unsuccessful morning, Randy commented. “Dang; I was sure I was on to something, but we’re at a ‘dead’ end, no pun intended.”

“Maybe we just narrowed our scope too much,” answered Jeff, before he offered “Maybe if we look further North we’ll be successful.”

“You have a point there,” responded Randy. “What if our guy didn’t even know anything about framing Mark, but was hired as an actor simply for a gig? We need to look at death notices in Los Angeles and Hollywood.”

Randy began looking online at Los Angeles-area Death Notices from the current date backward and didn’t take but a few minutes to come across the photograph of Art Black, age 46, a local bartender who dabbled in low budget films, who was shot and killed in an apparent gang-related shooting just the day before, on Tuesday, December 22nd.

Art Black’s features looked quite similar to Mark Evanston’s, although no one who knew either of them would really ever mistake one for the other, at least in person.

“We’re going to Los Angeles,” Randy hollered to Jeff. “Grab your bags.”

Randy called his brother Steve and told them the good news that they had likely found Mark’s sex double, even if it wasn’t at all good news for the late Art Black of Los Angeles.

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Randy and Jeff drove to Los Angeles, arriving at their new hotel room late that afternoon. In the morning they would contact Art Black’s family and his agent, trying to discover more about this former actor, at least if they were available.

Jeff searched through the internet and found Art's website, which provided a listing of his acting credits and provided them with ample photographs of Art. Art's social media accounts provided Jeff and Randy with a listing of Art's friends.

Thursday morning, December 24th, Jeff went to the suburban home belonging to Art's parents. Jeff found the parents understandably distraught that their son's life had been taken so suddenly and so callously.

The parents were glad to speak with Jeff, even if they didn't know his connection, for that meant at least someone was looking into Art's murder. Local police seemed overwhelmed and had no leads, and here was a man with obvious police experience investigating their son's tragic murder.

Art's dad admitted that his son had gotten into some trouble when he was in his 20's and early 30's, but claimed Art hadn't any issues for well over a decade, and was clean and sober twelve years.

Jeff asked them what their son had most recently worked on. The parents didn't know many of the particulars other than Art had received a good advance before starting the work which was expected to last about a month.

Not wanting to cause Art's parents any pain identifying Art in the explicit photos, Jeff didn't show any of them to the parents.

The mother said Art's latest project started in San Diego because it was said to be a perfect fit for the project, but that most of his work took place up in or near Portland. Art finished his task December 5th and flew back home the following day, she said. Overall, he seemed happy about his experience but was sad that it was over.

Jeff asked if police offered any leads in the shooting, but was told that it appeared that Art just happened to be in the wrong place and the wrong time, evidently caught up by chance in the middle of some random act of gang-retaliation.

While Jeff spoke with Art's parents, Randy went to the police station charged with investigating Art's death.

Randy spoke with the officer leading the investigation who freely talked with him once he verified Randy's background, on the off chance Randy would be able to help the overwhelmed officer clear a case with few leads off his overburdened shelf.

"Art Black's shooter was described as a tall white male, in his early 30's, dressed in jeans, cowboy boots, and a ballcap."

"Cowboy boots? I thought it was supposed to be gang-related," Randy commented.

"Well, the driver was Latino, in his 20's, wearing gang colors and driving a two-door, mid-60's Chevy low-rider, teal green in color; so if there was a gang connection, perhaps that would be it," answered the officer.

"Did the witness who thought the shooting might be random say what it appeared the shooter was shooting at, if Art wasn't the intended victim?" asked Randy.

"Even that statement suggested some gang involvement; there were gang markings on the fence behind Mr. Black," said the officer. "The witness thought the shooters were maybe sending a message to a rival gang, by shooting up their gang sign."

"So how many shots were fired and how many hit him?"

"Witnesses claimed as many as a half-dozen shots were fired. We found five shell casings and know of five bullets or bullet holes; three in the fence and two 9 mm slugs hitting Mr. Black in the chest, about six inches apart," said the officer.

"From what distance was Mr. Black shot?" asked Randy.

"About 30 feet, as far as we can tell," replied the officer.

“That’s pretty good shooting for two tight shots,” commented Randy. “And the other three may have even been intentional decoys. 9 mm, you say?”

“Yes,” replied the officer. “Does that mean something to you?”

“Well, we had two shootings in Vancouver, Washington, last Friday, both men being killed by two tight shots with a 9 mm in the chest,” answered Randy. “I think that Art Black was possibly connected with those two Vancouver murders.”

“Who do I contact in Vancouver to see if ballistics match?” asked the officer.

Randy gave him both the Vancouver Police detective’s contact information who was the primary lead in the deaths of Mike Holladay and Stan Bogelman and also Sheriff’s Detective Bobby Fosgren’s information who was handling Jamie Jeffers’ case. Randy thanked the local officer for being so helpful.

Randy and Jeff met up with each other to meet Art Black’s agent at his office. This was the man who would get Art a few unimportant gigs, taking a small cut for his troubles. The office was located at the edge of a run-down business district, in a ramshackle building which could stand more than a thorough cleansing and a few coats of paint.

The mini-blinds covering the windows were missing slats, and many were badly bent. The fluorescent lights flickered and more than one of them was missing its plastic shroud. The ceiling showed evidence of water damage and the paint was peeling badly.

The stench of mold and mildew filled the stuffy office. The only thing which overpowered the foul odor of mold was the cigar smoke which filled the office despite the city’s ban on indoor smoking in places of business. “The city can stuff this cigar where the sun don’t shine,” commented the proprietor to anyone who was bold enough to mention the noxious fumes found in his establishment.

Photographs of actors and actresses from yesteryear covered nearly every square foot of the walls, under a thin layer of soot, attesting to the fact that at one time the agent had clout in Hollywood, but that had been long ago.

"I feel bad about Art's death," replied the agent. "It just goes to show you never know what any given day will bring."

"Can I ask you about Art's last job?" asked Randy.

"I didn't get it for him," replied the agent. "He got it himself. But he gave me my cut nevertheless, since I'm his agent. Anyways, Art comes by in early November and gives me \$500, bragging this was just from a down payment for his work that was supposed to last all month. I barely got a \$500 cut on Art's work for a whole year, let alone for one short gig which wouldn't last more than a month."

"He hit it big time, as far as I was concerned, even though it was short. He wouldn't tell me much about the job, saying it was 'confidential'."

"He said he was cast opposite some hot babe, and they was goin' to make some whoopee; but it wasn't being filmed with a movie camera, which surprised me, for that kind of bread."

"But I didn't ask no questions, because in my business, 'money talks', and he who has the money may make the rules which I ain't gonna question. No, not me; I minds my own business."

"Did Mr. Black say anything more about this woman he starred with, where he met her, or anything like that?" asked Jeff, pulling out one of the sex photos showing Art and Jamie.

"So that was Art's co-star?" asked the agent, obviously impressed with the view. "Yes, I can see why Art was so excited to work with her. She's smokin' hot."

“Getting to your question, as far as I recall, he was talking with this dame at the bar where he worked, down the road, at Dominic’s; that she walks into his bar and hired him on the spot, saying that he was just what she had been looking for,” replied the agent.

“Dominic’s, you say?” replied Randy.

“Yes, down on Third, about two miles south,” answered the agent.

“By the way, is there a central source where someone could easily view photographs of lots of actors and even get a listing of their past work?” asked Jeff.

“Sure, it’s called ‘the internet’,” chuckled the agent. “You can find most anything you ever wanted to find there at any number of sites, and any struggling entertainer will post their photo and contact information most anywhere that’ll let them, on the off-chance someone will hire them.”

Randy and Jeff drove to Dominic’s where Art worked when he wasn’t working his craft, which was most of the time outside the past month. The bartender on duty had known Art eight years.

Randy showed a few of the sex photos to the bar-keep, who identified the woman in the pictures being the same one who came into the bar and hired Art. The bartender also said that the photos were undoubtedly of Art Black, although he looked older and heavier.

“Yah, the pretty lady offers Art \$10,000 for a month’s work and then says that they will be making love scenes together,” offered the bartender. “Art would have paid \$1,000 to make love with that woman, if he had \$1,000 to his name, so Art thought he’d died and gone to heaven. Actually, come to think of it, he’s dead now, so I hope he is in heaven. It’s all too bad though, Art was a decent guy and I liked him. He always treated me real well.”

“Was anyone else with this woman?” asked Jeff, “anyone who could have been a photographer, by chance?”

“I’m sorry, I don’t remember,” replied the bartender. “That was nearly two months ago, after all. But I remember this woman real well; it wasn’t every day some pretty lady tells a co-worker that she’s going to pay him \$10,000 to make love to her for a month, or at least to go through the motions. No, I won’t ever forget her.”

Randy Frederickson and Jeff Roberts went back to the Los Angeles detective working Art Black’s death and gave him information on the bartender at Dominic’s and copies of the sex-scene photos of Art and Jamie Jeffers taken at the San Diego hotel which they specified for him.

With Christmas all but upon them, Art Black’s recent history adequately known, and no leads on the photographer, Randy and Jeff cut their Southern California trip short and flew home to spend time with their families for the holidays, even though the airports were a madhouse.

Steve Frederickson and Dennis Chen had already gone home to their respective families for Christmas several days earlier, but Peter Dennison stayed in the Portland Metro area.

Peter spent Christmas Eve with Penny, Blake and Bethany, along with the latter’s spouses and children, as Penny planned to visit Mark as long as she could in the Christmas morning and afternoon special visiting sessions.

Bethany and her estranged husband Brad had been seeing one another again, putting at least on hold the tumultuous divorce proceedings. Bethany’s experiences with Terry Runco — a.k.a. Adam Ramsey — caused her to re-evaluate her life at the same time Brad realized just how easily Bethany could have been harmed. Both Bethany and Brad realized that they may have jumped the gun initiating divorce proceedings, but they still had a long way to go with full reconciliation.

Peter said it would be nice to spend the holidays with a family going through life's trials but otherwise still thankful for their ample blessings.

Mark's experience in jail, especially at Christmas, was something new to him. New perspectives aren't necessarily a bad thing, Mark realized, for they can precipitate a mental unlocking of stubborn roadblocks which inadvertently kept one's mind improperly closed.

While Mark wasn't capable of writing great works in jail, following the lead of the 1st century Apostle Paul and other famous writers more recent, his incarceration did provide him ample time to contemplate current issues and further refine a few helpful insights.

During his confinement, Mark began pondering free market alternatives to Federal Reserve notes, to begin again trading value with value, rather than using a private medium of exchange which itself has little inherent value.

The government stamp which alleges that paper and ink had great value simply because the government accepted the cash for debts due it was tragically becoming less convincing each passing day, i.e., that those notes held real and lasting value.

Peter and attorney Don Heath met with Sheriff's Detective Bobby Fosgren on Monday, December 28th.

"The ballistic report came back on the bullets taken out of Art Black, and the bullets taken from both Stan Bogelman and Mike Holladay. The shell casings found at both crime scenes which were ejected from a semi-automatic pistol have also been examined and compared," reported Detective Fosgren. "While the report cannot independently confirm 100% that the same gun was used without access to the actual gun, it did confirm the caliber of bullets was the same in each case, and also that the manufacturer, weight, composition, and type of bullets are all the same.

“The firing pin indent and the ejection marks on the shell casings appear identical. For all practical purposes, we can say with a fair degree of accuracy that the bullets were fired from the same gun.

“Of course, if we are ever able to retrieve the gun, further comparisons then available would better aid the laboratory in providing conclusive findings.

“The officer investigating Art Black’s death in Los Angeles confirmed from the bar-keep that Jamie Jeffers hired Mr. Black to make some love scene photographs with her. The officer said both the bartender and Mr. Black’s talent agent said the sex photos looked like Art to them, though he obviously had some artistic makeup work done to make him look a little differently.

“The officer also confirmed Art and Jamie were seen by one of the maids at the San Diego hotel where they made the indoor love scenes, which pictures match the actual room décor there and not here, as you’ve pointed out and as confirmed by the San Diego police.

“The officer also said that the hotel pool-area barkeep well-remembered Jamie, and the two fired employees confirmed it was Jamie who helped get them fired, although they said it was worth it.

“It appears our local hotel site was just for Jamie Jeffers and a made-up Art Black to be seen going into and out of the room, trying to establish that Jamie and Mark Evanston had been enjoying one another’s company here in town at our local hotel for nearly a month.

“Taken together, the District Attorney is growing increasingly satisfied that Mark Evanston was framed all along and is innocent of his charges, likely in attempt to discredit him for his work which could easily make some powerful people quite angry.

“But even if Mark Evanston *isn’t* innocent, the D.A. is finding out that he really no longer has enough convincing evidence to take to trial, at least at the present time.

“In other words, the D.A. doesn’t want to take a weak case to trial where it could easily fail, because then double jeopardy issues would prevent re-trying Mark even if compelling evidence was later found.

“Mark may soon be freed, at least until such time any persuasive evidence was found strongly linking him back to the crime. But don’t quote me on this; it’s not my call in the end.

“The D.A. and I have both formally placed a rush order requesting the coroner complete his investigation and issue his final death certificate listing the precise cause of Jamie Jeffers’ death.

“We’re both now telling the coroner to look at Jamie’s death from the angle that it wasn’t likely a complication from her presumed assault, but an intentional homicide by an unknown assailant, perhaps even while she was in the hospital.

“If Ms. Jeffers’ physical trauma was staged as we now believe it was, then the trauma was probably much lighter than we realized, aimed primarily at producing superficial bruising of the skin and causing visible lacerations at appropriately-sympathetic sites such as the lips, nose, and eyes.”

The detective said good-bye to his guests and wished them a ‘Happy New Year’.

“It looks happier every day,” commented Peter in return.

“It looks like Christmas is coming to us a second time this year,” replied Don, after he and Peter were alone. “It isn’t every day that police all but admit they made a mistake, at least so candidly and before they are absolutely certain.”

Peter left to tell Penny the good news while Mr. Heath went to tell his client the news personally.

Mark and Penny were both elated, but they were cautioned that it may yet take some time, that Mark would nevertheless surely end up spending New Year's Eve in jail.

"There are worse things," Mark later admitted to Penny. "We have much to be thankful for even as we are put through trials which seem difficult to bear from our current perspective."

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The coroner completed his report and issued Jamie's final death certificate on Monday, January 4, 2016. Given the interfering holidays, this time table was rather quick.

The completed autopsy investigation turned up a small amount of alkaloid toxin from the poisonous aconite plant in Jamie Jeffers' body, a tried-and-true poison which has been around since ancient times. The root of the plant is especially toxic, and an extract of it placed within a small amount of alcohol can do the job of ending life quite proficiently.

But aconite poisoning wouldn't normally show up on a standard toxicology screen perhaps performed during routine autopsies, which typically check for common substances likely to be overdosed, such as alcohol, pain killers, and popular recreational drugs.

Since neither murder nor especially poisoning were originally suspected when the initial autopsy work had been performed, further toxicology testing beyond the standard tox-screen which had come back negative was at that time unwarranted.

After all, coroners and medical examiners, like everyone else in the real-world and outside of popular crime scene investigation television shows, have genuine time constraints and limited budgets.

But since no definite cause of death was initially discovered, additional investigation was further warranted, even though it wasn't rushed to completion. After all, the final outcome of Jamie's death investigation wasn't at that time believed to point to any other assailant besides Mark Evanston and no other cause than directly or indirectly related to physical attack.

After the D.A. and Detective Fosgren received the coroner's official report, they talked amongst themselves and then called in attorney Don Heath for a talk.

"Here's your copy of the coroner's final report, which now confirms that Jamie Jeffers died of cardiac arrhythmia at 2:06 a.m. on Wednesday, December 16, 2015, induced by acute aconite poisoning," began the District Attorney. "Given the concentration found in her body, the poison was undoubtedly administered between 9:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. on Tuesday night, December 15, 2015, while Ms. Jeffers was at the hospital and while your client Mark Evanston was being questioned at the Sheriff's station.

"We are permanently dropping all charges against Mark Evanston and his release paperwork is being finalized as we speak.

"Both Detective Fosgren and I are now convinced, because of the intentional poisoning of Ms. Jeffers, that Mr. Evanston is wholly innocent, and that he never had any complicity in any of the supposed crimes which lead up to the primary crime, the intentional first degree murder of Ms. Jamie Jeffers.

"Given the publicity the case has attracted and the allegations aimed at an innocent man, we're going to hold a press conference to announce our decision. I assume that both Mark Evanston and his wife Penny will wish to be there along with you, Don.

"You can count on it," said the attorney. "That is wonderful news. My client and his wife will be thrilled."

Peter was waiting for Don outside the District Attorney's office.

“That went remarkably well,” Don admitted to Peter, filling him in on the discussion which had gone on inside the closed office. “You know, Peter, when I took this case, I thought we were in for quite a fight. You must give your investigators my accolades for a job well done, in short order. They were fantastic.”

“I agree, and I will pass along your comments,” replied Peter. “Let’s go see Penny and tell her the fantastic news. I know she will be absolutely thrilled. We can then take her to Mark as we inform him and wait to pick him up.”

Penny broke into tears hearing that Mark was finally cleared of any and all wrong-doing, not that she ever for even a moment thought he was guilty. She was simply so glad that the Sheriff’s office and District Attorney now finally realized it also.

Penny was allowed to tell Mark the great news and a heavy burden immediately lifted from his shoulders. They waited patiently together until his formal release, which was completed by 2:30 pm.

The press conference began at 3:00 pm.

The District Attorney spoke first, clearing Mark of all charges, informing his listeners that the evidence against Mark had all been fabricated.

“Jamie Jeffers’ death was caused by a tincture of poison which had been introduced during her stay at the hospital by someone who purposefully sought to kill her; evidently to frame Mark Evanston of a capital crime while also preventing Ms. Jeffers from recanting her fabricated story once the falsified evidence began to unravel upon close examination by competent investigators,” the D.A. relayed.

Detective Fosgren next spoke briefly and provided a few more details, including the California link of Mark’s double, although he didn’t mention Art Black’s name, leaving such matters for the California police.

Attorney Don Heath took a turn at the podium, making sure the news stations had plenty of sensational sound bites which would play well on the evening news.

He mentioned the Patriot Corps' name often, even more often than his own; helping to counter all the negative publicity the organization had received over the past month.

Don made it a point to assert that opponents of the Patriot Corps must be quite worried about this great organization to go to such great lengths to tear it down, in the end only succeeding in the intentional killing of their own inside operatives.

Don also pointed out the determined search for the truth vindicated Mark Evanston and the Patriot Corps from all the planted evidence and brutal lies.

"Free Speech is still an honored concept in this country," Don continued. "And the most righteous of speech is that of truth against corrupt forces which seek to destroy Good to advance the cause of Evil.

"Today, I, attorney Donald Heath, am very proud to have served truth, justice and the American way, freeing my client Mark Evanston to continue his Patriot Quest to Build Awareness of Republican Knowledge so he can help Restore Our American Republic. Hear him B.A.R.K.; Help him R.O.A.R.!"

Mark spoke last and said his heart ached for the families of the deceased who he once considered friends, people who obviously got wrapped in things they shouldn't have with people whom they should have never trusted.

He thanked the Patriot Corps' in-house security detail and the Sheriff's office for shining the bright light of truth into dark corners of corruption to rout out deceit where it was found.

“There is great evil in the world,” Mark commented. “And we just celebrated the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the One and True Source of Good in the world.

“What we have witnessed is one small part of the age-old fight between Good and Evil. Truth is a powerful weapon in this fight. Light illuminates Darkness, and enough Light eradicates it. Remember always that the Truth shall set us all Free.

“The truth which set me free is the same truth which will set the country free. Just as purposeful investigation by competent investigators exposed the contrived evidence against me as but deceitful lies, so too does purposeful investigation by competent investigators expose the long and deceitful efforts to enslave these United States of America to unjustly enrich a few very powerful men and women.

“It is only necessary to pay attention and seek the truth, that truth that shall set us all free. God Bless these United States of America, and the Republic for which it so proudly stands.”

Peter drove Mark and Penny home and visited with them before letting them settle down from all the drama of the past few weeks. Mark and Penny invited Peter to stay with them as long as he liked, to rest up before he returned to the East Coast.

Peter offered “As bad as this whole sordid affair has been, the press conference and Janet’s planned press releases will garner us an unprecedented amount of free publicity.

“I guess this shows the truth in the matter as ‘there is no such thing as bad publicity: just make sure one’s name is spelled correctly’.

“The Patriot Corps will be able to build exponentially upon your trials which thankfully didn’t go to trial. Even bad experiences can have a happy ending.”

“Well, next time let it be you,” Mark replied.

“OK,” Peter chuckled, “the next time a Patriot Corps officer is falsely charged with assault, rape, and murder, I volunteer that it be me.”

Chapter Fourteen

Charles Cunningham grew furious as he watched the evening news which showed that his best laid plans were dashed, again. Mark Evanston's good name had been cleared of all wrong-doing, and Charles realized that Mark and the Patriot Corps were back in business, undoubtedly now stronger than ever.

Charles knew that adept marketing agents working with the Patriot Corps could easily sell the story that Mark being framed by his opponents confirmed that the Patriot Corps was on the right track and that with a little more help, perhaps they could finish the job at hand.

With most of the minor players involved with Mark's framing now dead and buried, Charles arranged for mastermind Gerry Simmons to retire, alive, in luxury, wherever he desired.

This was the price Charles had to pay for directly picking his point man himself, the man who could point back to Charles.

Gerry knew that if his project failed, that his failure would demand an alternate conclusion. But that didn't mean Gerry would ever willingly accept such a condition, and Charles knew it.

Since failure of such an important project would demand swift retribution, Gerry took out an insurance policy in case anything should ever happen to him. Thus he documented every critical item as he went along and disseminated copies out to a few trusted friends who knew not to endanger their own lives and break open the sealed envelopes unless Gerry turned up dead, or missing without communication longer than three months.

This protection is what separated Gerry from his dead accomplices who didn't realize the level of Evil with which they were dealing. The others were but naïve novices who unknowingly entered into a whole new level of darkness they hadn't ever before known.

Though Gerry had served as the photographer, his proper role was really that of choreographer, setting up the whole frame-up, each step of each separate dance with the devil.

Working to put his most recent failure behind him, Charles began meeting with strategists to come up with a direct plan to stave off the destruction of his empire, something he could take to his financial colleagues which they could pursue with their collective might. It was now time to give up the failed offensive strikes and play strong defense, to hunker down and begin calling in favors.

Their best option involved the use the federal government's vast debt owed in large part to Charles and his colleagues, to force the government to look the other way instead of looking into their financial and criminal culpability, protecting the Federal Reserve System at all costs.

"Keep the status quo" was their motto; "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" became their mantra.

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With Mark and the Patriot Corps cleared of all wrong-doing, Janet Davidson was soon able to resume her lectures, which rose in popularity to a whole new level. She centered much of her talk on the concurring opinion by Justice Bradley in the 1871 *Legal Tender Cases* ruling, where the court justice tipped the ruling to the 5-4 majority, upholding the constitutionality of legal tender paper currencies, but where he nevertheless wrote:

"the power to make treasury notes a legal tender...is nevertheless a power not to be resorted to except upon extraordinary and pressing occasions, such as war or other public exigencies of great gravity and importance; and should be no longer exerted than all the circumstances of the case demand."

Justice Bradley's admonition that the paper currencies which the court was for the first time then upholding as legal tender nevertheless should not "be resorted to" any longer "than all the circumstances of the case demand" must finally be given proper deference, Janet asserted.

Janet argued that 153 years of public exigencies, of one pressing emergency following another extraordinary circumstance, one after another, was wholly improper and utterly ridiculous.

"Contrived truth is an oxymoron, a legal falsehood," Janet argued. "There is only 'truth', and the truth shall set us free. Let's have the honesty and moral integrity to finally call perpetual emergencies a manufactured lie. We must get back on the path of economic stability resting again upon our country's founding principles."

Mark and Penny began going along with Janet on her speaking tour, with Mark giving his recommendations for the market to compensate for the federal government's failure to restore the gold dollar to its proper role as America's legal standard of value.

Mark's presentation was developed largely while he had been in jail and it laid the groundwork for an effective market-based transition away from Federal Reserve note dollars, since the government didn't lead the way as was their duty. The presentation followed much of the work Mark was working toward in his *Dollars and nonCents* book, on which he also worked while he was in jail.

"The transition of the former America colonies into free and independent States later united under the new federal Constitution provides Americans today with invaluable insights, if we pay appropriate attention, to begin freeing ourselves from using liabilities as our false measure of assets," Mark began.

"At the time of independence from Britain, the 13 American States each had one of five separate monies of account, all confusingly using the same terms, but reflecting differing amounts of silver.

“These monies of account, all denominated in ‘pounds’, ‘shillings’ and ‘pence’, were left over from the States’ colonial eras which weren’t immediately changed by their newfound independence.

“To exchange goods and services in the money of account in one State into another State which happened to be on a different standard but which nevertheless used the same terms, one had to convert from one form of money to the other, so equivalent value could be maintained.

“For example, an item worth 21 shillings and eight pence in South Carolina money was in New Hampshire money equivalently valued at but four shillings.

“In principle this would be somewhat like converting today from U.S. paper dollars into Canadian dollars, even though both currencies are nominally denominated in ‘dollars’. Although they use the same terms, they are not the same thing.

“In early America, the Spanish milled dollar coin enjoyed increasing circulation in the marketplace, although nowhere in America did the dollar have any official government sanction whatsoever.

“Merchants soon discovered that items priced in dollars could easily be sold in dollars anywhere in the country. Customers and merchants alike soon began increasingly using the dollar of uniform value for their purchases and sales.

“In contrast, all the legal tender forms of money denominated in pounds, shillings and pence had to be converted anytime traders traded between States with differing monetary rates.

“Thus the convenience offered by the Spanish dollar of uniform value trumped the legal tender laws in every State enjoyed by that dollar’s competitors — pence, shillings and pounds.

“This is an important point to keep in mind today, that just because the paper dollar is the *de facto* money of account which enjoys legal tender status — actually only in the District of Columbia — that the private market can still nevertheless be privately eased toward greater adherence to fundamental monetary principles, just as the private markets after 1776 began easing away from legal tender money toward market-preferred money.

“When the Constitution of 1787 used the term “dollars” without defining the term in Article I, Section 9, Clause 1, it took the dollar as it was then found in the market, the Spanish milled dollar, and gave it a small measure of legal sanction.

“The Seventh Amendment, ratified in 1791, again provided the dollar with further official sanction.

“Then in 1792, Congress enacted the first coinage Act under the Constitution. This Act formally defined the new monetary unit for the country as a ‘dollar’, equivalent in value with the Spanish milled dollar.

“The American dollar authorized to be struck in the 1792 statute was therein legally defined to be a coin of 371.25 grains of pure silver which weighed, along with its copper alloy, a total of 416 grains, a ‘grain’ being the smallest unit in the troy weight system, of 480 grains being found in a troy ounce.

“The eagle was established as a coin of 247.5 grains of pure gold, weighing, along with its silver and copper alloy, a total of 270 grains, and ‘valued’ at ten dollars.”

Mark informed his audience that America was in 1792 firmly placed on a silver coin standard, along with a gold coin equivalency, effectively putting America on a bi-metallic monetary standard.

“Early American history shows the power of the marketplace, of the preferred market coin eventually trumping the official money of account, in time even officially replacing that old British standard in the Union of States and in every State of the Union,” Mark stated.

“The power of the marketplace is also seen in regulating the value of the gold and silver coins in 1834.

“Although the legal parity between gold and silver was first fixed by law in 1792 at 15-to-1, with gold worth 15 times more monetarily than a corresponding weight of silver, the Constitution’s framers and ratifiers realized that any gold-to-silver ratio established would surely change over time and thus empowered Congress with the express power to regulate the value of the coins struck by the mint.

“By the early 1820’s, this ratio was changing in the world market but not yet in American law. By failing to act soon enough, in time all the American gold coins were melted and sent overseas where gold was properly valued, where traders could receive more silver for their gold than they could in America.

“Before Congress finally acted in 1834, members of Congress effectively allowed traders an improper subsidy, giving them more American gold in exchange for less silver anytime the treasury was asked.

“Congress allowed traders one ounce of gold for every 15 ounces of silver presented at the treasury, because that remained the legal exchange rate between the two metals in American law; traders could then take that ounce of gold overseas and there receive 16 ounces of silver in trade, taking 15 of them back to the treasury and getting another ounce of gold, reaping perpetual profits until the treasury was depleted of all its gold.

“This 1834 Act was very important, and anyone wanting additional information should read *Monetary Laws*, available as a free electronic download at the PatriotCorps.org website. I will also cover some of the information in *Dollars and nonCents*, which will also be freely available at the website when it is completed.

“In this 1834 coinage Act, members of Congress gave existing gold coins which had been struck under the standards imposed by the 1792 Act a new increased value.

“Members of Congress also lightened the amount of gold in new gold eagles struck under the 1834 Act. This new, lighter-weight gold eagle coin was again valued at ten dollars, to reflect the reality of the greater worth of gold in the world marketplace.

“This 1834 Act indirectly confirmed the dollar of silver as America’s unchanging standard unit of value, as the act changed the legal relationship between gold and silver by leaving alone silver and increasing the value of gold, thereby and constitutionally ‘regulating’ our money of gold and silver *back to equivalent market rates*.

“So once again in 1834 we find the American legal tender laws of 1792 were over time trumped by the overwhelming power of the marketplace, with the market overpowering the legal ability of Congress to remain indifferent to their outdated monetary laws.

“We can take such history to heart today to begin developing a market alternative to legal tender Federal Reserve notes, even though those paper dollars now enjoy a huge and seemingly insurmountable barrier to effective competition.

“As early American coinage laws clearly reflect, ‘money’ is our most liquid form of property which properly relies upon *inherent* value rather than contrived value; the ‘dollar’ was established as our monetary unit of account, our standard unit in the measure of value, of 371.25 grains of pure silver.

“It was no coincidence that the power of Congress to ‘fix a System of Weights and Measures’ is found in the same constitutional clause as the power to coin money and regulate its value.

“Just as the ‘inch’ and ‘foot’ were instituted as measures of distance, the ‘ounce’ and ‘pound’ as measures of weight, the ‘dollar’ and ‘cent’ were instituted as our American measures for value, the standards by which value would be objectively measured.

“The ‘purchasing power’ of the dollar of course has always varied subjectively with respect to the availability of goods, services and circulating money.

“But with that said, the dollar and cent value of the silver coins, including also half-dollars, quarter-dollars, dimes, and half-dimes, were nevertheless all instituted in 1792 to be proportional in their dollar values as they were proportional in their amount of silver. The smaller gold coins likewise followed proportional suit as compared with the larger gold eagle.

“Section 11 of the 1792 coinage Act explicitly stated that the dollar *value* of American money was directly valued according to its *weight* of gold and silver, saying therein that ‘the proportional *value* of gold to silver in all coins which shall by law be *current as money*...shall be as fifteen to one, *according to quantity in weight*, of *pure gold* or *pure silver*.’

“This section of the 1792 coinage Act wasn’t the only section to clearly value money according to its proper weight of pure gold or pure silver.

“Section 16 also stated ‘That all the gold and silver coins...struck at...the...mint shall be a lawful tender in all payments whatsoever, those of full *weight* according to their respective *values*...and those of less than full *weight* at *values proportional* to their respective *weights*.’

“These sections of America’s first coinage Act clearly show the value of American legal tender money was directly proportional to the weight of pure gold and pure silver, period.

“Nothing could be legal tender money which did not itself contain gold or silver; paper claims issued by private banks to gold and silver were therefore just claims to money — mere promises to later pay in real money — not ever in and of themselves ever money on their own accord.

“Of course, gold and silver coins also contained an alloy to harden them to decrease their wear while the coins circulated from one pocket to another cash box, but the alloy did not add to the value of the coins.

“Value was set according to the standard weight of the gold and silver coins, including their alloy of precise amount, even though ultimately the value of the coins was strictly valued only according to the actual weight of pure gold or pure silver.

“By providing for valuations in the standard weight, value could be determined by simply weighing the coins, without needing to mathematically subtract out the alloyed percentage.

“But because Congress provided for valuations in the standard weight, Congress therefore established very strict standards for purity, even as they did not initially set any tolerance standards for weight of each coin, since by Section 16 of the 1792 Act, light-weight coins simply had lower legal value.

“But to understand just how fanatical early members of Congress were in establishing America on an honest coin standard, based upon proper purities of gold and silver, one can read Section 19 of the 1792 coinage act which proscribed the death penalty for any mint official who fraudulently attempted to debase the purity standard of our gold or silver coin.

“It is but a sad commentary that the 20th century mint put into practice wholesale debasement of all U.S. coins — actually District of Columbia coins — which would have sent their 18th - and 19th-century counterparts to the hangman’s noose even in the single instance.

“Severing the dollar first from gold in 1933 and then from silver in 1965 — again actually only for the District of Columbia — sadly places a difficult barrier today to continuing to use the term ‘dollar’, even if we properly restored the dollar to its historical definition.

“Unfortunately, the billions of cupro-nickel base-metal fifty-cent pieces, quarters and dimes are billions of reasons why silver cannot be easily used again monetarily, since these counterfeits too closely resemble the real thing to far too many millions of unsuspecting Americans.

“The destructive fraud perpetrated upon the American people by past Congresses, Presidents, and supreme Court Justices, with the help of the U.S. Department of the Treasury and the United States Mint, has effectively removed standard silver coins as an option to serve again in its historical role as America’s proper monetary base.

“And that to me is very sad, because I personally would have otherwise strongly preferred restoring our silver coin standard, along with a gold equivalency, although never at fixed legal ratios but always at floating market rates established or confirmed at time of sale.

“It is possible to make distinctive new silver coins, of course, such as with an octagonal shape, and perhaps this would be the route to go, so coins of silver could easily reach small purchases while gold coins of higher value could be used for larger purchases where any mathematic calculation needed to determine their present value would be less problematic.

“But to restore silver coins, Congress would need to correct the monetary errors of the past Congresses, including restoring the proportional weight of fractional silver coins to their proportional value which was severed in 1853, likely by a Congress which didn’t realize the full implications of their actions.

“But we are here today looking at free market alternatives which can be implemented even before government can be induced to restore monetary matters.

“Since gold coins have never been effectively counterfeited on a comparable scale as silver, gold is thus the free-market metal to redeem American money, given America’s tragic monetary history.

“As far as the paper dollar is concerned, the United States severed ‘weight’ from this invalid form of money and thereafter asserted that ‘money’ had ‘value’ independent of gold and silver.

“Thus, to correct matters now, the free market should attempt to do the opposite as that attempted by despotic government tyrants, so it is now proper for the market to sever arbitrary ‘value’ from money, and concentrate instead wholly on weight, preferably of gold.

“The market should simply now use gold in convenient units of weight, while disregarding arbitrary terms such as ‘dollar’ to indicate an arbitrary measure of value.

“No longer is it necessary to reference a ‘dollar’ amount of gold, of 25.8 grains of gold nine-tenths fine — for 23.22 grains of pure gold for every dollar, which, since 1837, had been the dollar-equivalent of gold, when the value of an ounce of gold equated to \$20.67.

“The ‘grain’ of pure gold is the most appropriate unit of weight which Americans could now use in the place of an indirect measure of value.

“Instead of a dollar’s worth of gold, we should simply use the ‘grain’ of fine gold as our unit of account, taking however many grains of pure gold as necessary to equate to the proper value in any given trade, such as buying one item for 3.22 grains of gold while another item may perhaps be worth 8.34 grains.

“It would be proper to develop some symbol to indicate the number of grains of pure gold, perhaps the ‘^’ symbol above the number 6 on a standard keyboard, indicative of either a ‘chevron’ or in this case the point of a ‘carrot’, as in 24-carat gold. For this purpose, however, the ‘carrot’ symbol would indicate the *number* of grains of pure gold, i.e., the weight of pure gold, rather than the actual purity of gold as reflected in carats.

“Thus ‘20.4^ Au’ would read 20.4 grains of pure gold, ‘Au’ being the chemical symbol of gold, *Aurum* — even if the actual purity of gold happened in this particular case to only be 14-carat gold; therefore with the actual total weight on the troy weight scale in this instance, with alloy, being 34.9716 total grains.

“Coins of 25 grains, 50 grains, 100 grains, 250 grains and 500 grains of pure gold — with any included alloy being superadded to the coins and purity level clearly struck on the face of the coin — could be minted for greater convenience, but the 480-grain, one-ounce gold bullion coins long struck now by the mint could easily be used in their place in the interim.

“The smaller bullion gold coins currently struck could also be used, although again valued in grains and not ever at their disproportionate ‘dollar’ values struck thereon, which intentionally do not maintain a proportionate value scale to their proportionate weight.

“Of course, the ‘grain’ of gold would become much more convenient for trading once trading accounts developed at gold depositories which were denominated in grains of gold, allowing purchases of items other than in even coinage units of 25 grains, 50 grains, etc.

“An interim means to introduce private gold depositories more quickly could be for customers to initially trade in and out of gold held at a gold depository in Federal Reserve note dollars, perhaps via use of debit cards, for any purchases made with any merchant not a member of the depository.

“In such a manner, even though the Federal Reserve note dollar would still end up being the unit of exchange for all accounting purposes, the grain of gold would still be the longer-term store of value. Of course, trades between account holders of the same exchange network should be allowed directly in grains of gold when both members involved in any given trade preferred it.

“While Article I, Section 10 expressly prevents the States from coining money, emitting bills of credit, or making anything but gold and silver coin a tender in the payment of debts, the U.S. Constitution does not prevent the States from setting up a gold depository, such as the precedent-setting one the State of Texas has recently approved.

“Such State-run depositories may significantly increase the initial level of private trust in the facility while at the same time decreasing the likelihood of direct or indirect federal intervention of this worthy endeavor.”

Mark continued on for another 10 minutes, before opening the discussion up for questions.

“What about Title 18 of the United States Code, Section 486, which prohibits anyone from passing or attempting to pass coins of gold, silver or other metal, intended for use as current money, under threat of lengthy prison terms?” asked a knowledgeable attendee.

“The most important thing to note about 18 USC 486 is the legal disclaimer at the beginning of the section which provides an absolute exemption to criminal prosecution and conviction for anyone ‘authorized by law’ to be otherwise able to pass honestly-struck coins of gold and silver or other metal,” Mark responded.

“If one traces the historical footnotes of this section back far enough, one will find a June 8, 1864 Act of Congress which first provided essentially the same wording as that found today, except it stated ‘except as *now* authorized by law.’

“Who was ‘now’ authorized by law to coin money as of June 8, 1864, were the same people as those authorized to do so on June 7, and before, which were any private persons who did so without fraudulent intent, who made coins of honest weight and purity, as many people had earlier actually done.

“It wasn’t as if the 1864 law, or any law thereafter enacted, prohibited all persons from *thereafter* coining money except as thereafter expressly authorized by law.

“Neither is it coincidental that the exemption wording didn’t state something to the effect that no person could thereafter coin money ‘except whoever is hereafter expressly authorized to do so by means of government license or permit.’”

“The most important facet to understand about this 1864 Act, and as later amended, is that it seeks to reverse cause and effect, to make it appear that American government is a government of inherent powers, where government can do whatever it wants and make private citizens the ones who need government permission to act.

“But American government is the entity which needs a specific delegation of authority to act in the first place and private American citizens may do whatever they want which has not been expressly made illegal by some enacted law which was enacted within a proper delegation of government authority.

“And, of course, which is absolutely crucial in this case, the federal government, certainly for the whole country, was never delegated the power to prohibit private citizens and private companies from striking their own gold or silver coins, certainly as long as those coins were honestly struck.

“While the States are prohibited from coining money by the express prohibition in Article I, Section 10, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution, private citizens and private companies are not State governments.

“Members of Congress have no means to prohibit private citizens or private companies from coining honest money, certainly for the whole country and early American history is replete with ample examples of privately-coined money.

“The fraudulent making of gold and silver coins, however, was never allowed, with Congress being empowered by Article I, Section 8, Clause 6 of the Constitution to enact laws prohibiting counterfeiting of the current coin of the United States.

“My new book *Dollars and nonCents* will discuss using a grain of gold as a standard unit of value and privately coining gold coins in grain units in greater detail than we are able to cover here.

“Anyone wanting to know more about these topics should watch the PatriotCorps.org website for that book title.

“But please remember, my best recommendation hasn’t anything directly to do with gold or silver coin, but is my Once and For All Amendment, to work diligently day and night laying the firm constitutional basis for this amendment and showing its fundamental need, pushing forward with its formal proposal and eventual ratification.

“The Once and For All Amendment must be our most important push. We can simply start trading in grains of gold when and where convenient, thereby establishing a market exchange rate between Federal Reserve note dollars and grains of pure gold which will be helpful for an eventual transition away from Federal Reserve note dollars, which have papered the world in debt.

“Undoubtedly private creditors who are owed money in ever-depreciating Federal Reserve note dollars will fall all over themselves to be instead paid in grains of gold. Especially during inflationary periods, it is be the debtors who will run after their creditors throwing ever-depreciating paper dollars their way, seeking to pay off their debts with their creditors in the cheapest money possible.

“Debtors naturally seek to pay off their debts in the cheapest money they can get away with, anywhere it is *artificially held by law* to be equivalent with another form of money with more inherent value. It was for this ‘little bit of larceny’ that paper currency ever thrived in the first place.

“When the first paper dollars circulated alongside gold and silver coin, the paper dollar’s value was appropriately discounted from its face value *to its market value* in gold anytime too many paper dollars were issued and their exchange value fell, thereby counter-acting much of the allure of paper dollars.

“However, anytime paper is artificially held at face value by that which masquerades as law, then more-valuable gold and silver coin are naturally retained by debtors. Paper is preferentially paid to creditors to the extent debtors are able to get away with it.

“But gold clauses kept paper currency in check by mandating the form of payment required of debtors. Gold clauses within private contractual obligations were nevertheless upheld by courts even though paper currency was otherwise declared a legal tender, because of the fundamental right of contract and to supersede uniform law in the individual case.

“As long as gold and silver coin were kept in circulation and with gold clauses prevalent in long-term contracts, even paper currency declared a legal tender was still kept in check.

“But when gold and then silver were removed from circulation, only paper dollars remained behind, although small cupro-nickel base metal coins also began circulation in an inconsequential manner.

“Now the sole use of paper money in the marketplace robs the ability of debtors as a whole to ever pay off their collective debts, virtually enslaving them over time. While individual debtors may escape debt bondage, greater numbers of debtors fall to increasing servitude each passing year.

“As Janet Davidson has noted, 153 years of legal tender paper currencies, 153 years of pressing government exigencies and 153 years of urgent government emergencies are more than enough.

“We must finally move beyond legal tender paper currencies, we must move beyond government emergencies, we must return to trading goods and services using money of inherent value rather than resorting to arbitrary means emitted for the exclusive benefit of the most-favored of politically-connected people.

“The grain is the proper unit and gold is the proper metal to meet that challenge today.

Bare Liberty

“And there are also a few vital lessons Americans should have learned from the 2007 debt crisis.

“First was that most Americans were afraid of economic collapse out of fear of losing what they had. But that begs the question, what did they really have?

“Americans had extreme liabilities and burdensome debts which weighed heavily upon their shoulders even before the crisis manifested itself in such a blatant fashion. Burdensome debt was the prevailing symptom, but not the actual problem.

“Homeowners who couldn’t even afford 30-year mortgages on their houses had five year mortgages with balloon payments, almost ensuring that they would ultimately fail.

“People had seven-year loans on vehicles which were falling apart or shorter-term lease payments with low mileage plan allotments with stiff over-mileage penalties.

“Americans had perpetual monthly payments on their maxed-out credit cards, which were issued out in number until they were assured of failure.

“After decades of supposed prosperity, Americans in 2007 were yet deeply mired in debt. It was that debt which pressured them so greatly every month; it was that debt which burdened them every paycheck; it was therefore really that debt which they stood to lose.

“It is true, of course, that Americans also stood to lose the use of those assets to which they were so heavily indebted.

“Thus, for the continued right to use heavily mortgaged or leased assets, Americans had given up their freedom, their independence, their rightful limited government, their honest money.

“But if they were so heavily indebted even during a prolonged era of apparent prosperity, was it really proper that they should have ever even had use of heavily-mortgaged property to begin with, property which they obviously could not really afford?

“Thus, easy-credit given to over-extended debtors lay closer to the root of our problem. But squarely at the base of that problem is debt-based ‘money’ itself.

“Debt-based money is easily emitted because it simply requires paper and ink which are both otherwise quite plentiful. Debt-based money doesn’t have to be located, mined, sifted, melted, transported, purified, alloyed, formed, sliced and struck as do gold and silver coins.

“Paper credit induces the ups and downs of the market, causing greater swings of instability which become increasingly difficult to accurately forecast. Savers, investors, businesses and individuals are increasingly cast in the role of speculators, just as the stakes of being wrong escalate.

“Bankruptcy can perhaps never be viewed in a positive light, but it can nevertheless be a cleansing experience, a chance to start afresh under proper guidelines.

“Sure, one may have to learn to do without for a while, but that isn’t necessarily a bad thing for the people who otherwise won’t learn it any other way.

“If one can get oneself and the whole financial system back on solid foundation, just think how cleansing a market correction can actually be, especially if we first take the proper steps and ratify the Once and For All Amendment and adequately inform the American public of the causes and consequences of our current self-destructive tendencies which must necessarily come to an end at some point in time anyway.

“For instance, getting the U.S. Government and Congress back on a firm constitutional basis would pare government down to a very small fraction of its current size, dropping its demands on individuals and companies to also to a very small fraction of its current size, freeing the market in an unprecedented fashion.

“Getting our money back on solid foundation of inherent value would transform people’s lives.

“Again, in any tumultuous transition period, the chaos and uncertainty would surely be worrisome; but the opportunity to restore fiscal and political sanity should not be ignored, especially if the proper course was effectively charted and became widely known and people could understand the vast benefit they’d ultimately be able to achieve on the far side of the crisis rather quickly.

“There are any number of examples provided by the 2007 fiscal crisis of people upside-down in their homes nevertheless seizing the opportunity presented by the large drop in home prices to buy a larger home for less money at a lower interest rate and then walk away from their old homes and old zero-down mortgages without much more direct pain than a temporary hit to their credit scores.

“Relatives of mine who lost their home in the crisis thereafter saved up enough money in several short years to buy outright an older four-bedroom brick home with one and a half-baths, on four tax lots, in a depressed area in Ohio for a whopping sum total of only \$18,500.

“Although they lost their first home, what they really lost during their four-year struggle was their \$180,000, 30-year mortgage. Their new home was paid for, free and clear, *because* of frugal living and the depressed economy. And that even had nothing to do with getting government back on its proper track or any bailouts.

“Their new home was actually larger and on more acreage. The head of the household quickly found work at competitive wages, so the young family of six was soon much better off, without the constant worry of meeting their mortgage, and without having to worry about perpetual monthly rental payments.

“Such lessons should not be lost on anyone who can think things through and see the bigger picture.

“What we actually stand to lose are heavy financial burdens; what we stand to gain is security.

“That which we stand to lose is government overreach; that which we stand to gain is limited government.

“What we actually stand to lose is tyranny; what we stand to gain is freedom.

“We must continue to consistently fight for government properly limited by the express commands of the U.S. Constitution.

“Let’s finally enforce the whole thing, including the monetary provisions of Article I, Section 8, Clause 5.

“We must finally enforce the whole thing, not just Article I, Section 8, Clause 17.”

Mark’s words penetrated the air, slowly sinking into the minds of the audience who listened in rapt attention.

Mark continued, “My Once and For All Amendment would necessarily limit also the legal applicability of the Federal Reserve Act beyond the not-to-exceed-ten-miles-square legal jurisdiction for the District of Columbia, which actually, after the 1846 retrocession of Alexandria back to Virginia, is now really an area of about six-miles-by-ten-miles.

“While Federal Reserve notes could of course still be traded amongst people within the States just as they are actually free to now trade with each other in Canadian Dollars if they wanted, no longer would the Federal Reserve note dollars be considered as a forced legal tender in the States, at least outside of each individual contract on a case-by-case basis, because no longer could legislative acts actually enacted under Article I, Section 8, Clause 17 be legally enforced beyond those legal six-by-ten mile boundaries, other than perhaps those forts, magazines, dock-yards and other needful buildings under the exclusive legislative jurisdiction of Congress.

“Of course, if one looks at Section 30 of the original December 23, 1913 Federal Reserve Act, one sees that Congress “expressly reserved” the right to “amend, alter, or repeal this Act.”

“So, while we’re correcting things as a whole, we could also correct the bigger issues one-on-one, even if they only really involved the District of Columbia, and even if they were originally only implemented as temporary expedients.

“And there is also the legal principle that fraud vitiates all contracts. The United States were hi-jacked in a wide-scale government corruption scheme for immense personal gain between many participants who changed over time.

“While fraud is attempting to deceive and attempting to cover up that deception, attempting to cover up that deception should really include the hiding in plain sight a few key words or important phrases within lengthy legislative Acts and court rulings.

“Improper Acts can be repealed and all the pertinent matters thoroughly investigated, bringing all culpable parties to justice.

“Government has always been very good at documentation, and scores of clues have been everywhere left for later investigators to determine the responsibility of the players.

“Federal and State prisons are now full of petty criminals and it would be wholly improper to leave them rotting there while all the high-dollar criminal masterminds hide behind invalid laws which sought to plunder the extensive assets of the country.

“But is also proper to realize that all the original scoundrels who originated all this deceitful legislation are long since dead and buried.

“At this point, proper punishment of the dead is limited to correcting the history books to reflect the massive harm which they caused through their purposeful deception for immense private gain.

“Ultimately it will likewise prove impossible to punish all the current offenders to the full extent of their guilt; so many are there and in so many varying degrees of culpability. Issues of fairness and equity will probably mean that many people will get off without effective punishment.

“The main principle must be to first correct the error of our errant ways, ensuring that they do not continue. Punishment of past sins should be a secondary goal while our primary goal must be to ensure that the continued sinning has stopped.

“America has much to heal from, but healing cannot easily occur if vengeance is sought after too strenuously, possibly to the ruin of our primary efforts.

“We must seek to do what is humanly possible and then move forward, never forgetting the invaluable lessons which we have hopefully now learned, that we ignore fundamental American principles of government only at our peril.”

With each new presentation, the Patriot Corps’ efforts were paying off, sometimes only one person at a time.

But this continuous improvement of the odds was wholly unlike the election game played for hundreds of years, as growing power exercised by the winners made each elected person more important, and therefore elections far more important than they otherwise should have been. So important, in fact, that the only thing both sides ever agreed on was that no matter which way one voted, just make sure one voted.

But the Patriot Corps cared little who won elections; caring primarily only about the power which the winners were thereafter able to exercise.

Finally limiting the allowed power made who won an election far less relevant, as every winner thereafter only had the narrow amount of powers to exercise which had been expressly enumerated, together with only those means both necessary and proper to implement their enumerated powers.

This difference between a limited government of enumerated powers and a government which may do everything except that which was expressly prohibited were more different than was the night from the day.

Bare Liberty

As Randy Frederickson had shown when he finally realized that two different hotel rooms were used to frame Mark, once Randy knew what to look for, he could begin rapidly putting together the separate pieces of the puzzle to discover what really happened. He needed only to notice the various inconsistencies and then follow their lead until the full story was understood.

Mark Evanston used the same compare-and-contrast technique with his audience. Once one finally realized that Congress and the U.S. Government had two separate sources of power under which they could operate, individuals could finally start accurately separating the actions of government into those two separate sources.

When everything contrary to the spirit of the Constitution was traced back to their source, it was, time and again, the inherent power which the Congress and the U.S. Government could use for the government seat and federal forts which needed no specific enumeration other than government be empowered to exercise exclusive power to act in all cases whatsoever, where they could do everything and anything except that which was expressly forbidden.

But once the citizens and States finally circumscribed this inherent power of Congress only to the government seats and federal forts with Mark's Once and For All Amendment, the remainder of the Constitution would finally again be made relevant in the day-to-day affairs of the whole country.

The United States would finally offer the world a true alternative to all-powerful government, of limited government action for limited government ends, with We The People finally enjoying all the freedom which truly limited government allows.

America's greatest export would thus soon be freedom; fully consistent American liberty. America would no longer necessarily be the world's policemen, but the world's proper role model.

People the world over would finally have a consistent role model to compare and contrast with their own corrupt government.

Truth, not clever secrecy, hidden deception, and military might, will again make America great, greater than any American living anywhere on earth can scarcely fathom.

America's military strength cannot legitimately rest upon anything but our civil strength, which must ultimately rest upon following the wise principles as expressed by our Declaration of Independence, that all men are created equal, endowed by the Creator with unalienable rights, that among those rights are life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.

Governments are instituted among man to secure these rights, deriving their just authority from the consent of the governed. But when any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the unfettered right of the American people to institute new forms to effect their safety and happiness.

Mark's Once and For All Amendment is the necessary and proper means to fully implement the rightful ends of American government, back to the rightful ends as originally viewed by our nation's founders.

Chapter Fifteen

The Patriot Corps was again becoming increasingly effective, slowly finding its way developing effective marketing strategies to hit Americans of every persuasion with the reality of strict construction of the *whole* Constitution.

Americans were having a difficult time realizing that the Constitution had always been strictly construed by the courts, but the courts had simply inferred that other clauses were a factor when they were not, when the courts simply allowed omnipotent government by strict interpretation of Clause 17.

Quite simply, everything which pointed to creative construction of some other constitutional clause was actually performed within and solely under Article I, Section 8, Clause 17.

The *Legal Tender Cases* and Alexander Hamilton's 1791 opinion on the constitutionality of the bank of the United States both showed the truth in that assertion, even though Hamilton's opinion was the only time such admission was ever clearly acknowledged, and then only in a few particular passages well-hidden within a multitude of irrelevant passages merely meant to obscure the relevant few.

Mark Evanston kept up his semi-regular rounds of going into the area neighborhoods in his colonial patriot outfit, keeping tabs on the pulse of the American public. It was his odd quirk, his unique signature, which allowed him to place his own stamp on reaching out to people he would otherwise never meet, on the off-chance he would run into people who would become great defenders of his Patriot Quest to Restore Our American Republic.

Mark tried to avoid pre-judging his listeners, and to the extent he did so without intent, he was often wrong. Some of the most enthusiastic people to hear his message were often the people he would have least-guessed would have much interest.

Conversely, some of the most-turned off were people who he would have thought would have been quite receptive to his viewpoint.

Despite his desire to avoid pre-judging anyone, Mark sometimes avoided the best neighborhoods, because too often people who resided there placed the acquisition of money as the highest priorities in their lives, to such extent that they were unwilling to ever support anything which could theoretically jeopardize their current way of life. After all, they had already proven themselves rather successful at navigating the current political climate.

Though many of these successful people complained often about many aspects of the status quo, the sad reality was that few of them were really ready for the unvarnished competition of the free market, preferring government protect their small piece of the status quo turf.

Mark also typically avoided the worst of neighborhoods, not only for his personal safety, but also because too often he just got blank stares of indifferent people who had no real desire to improve their current lot in life, as if everything was beyond their control.

But that didn't mean Mark did not venture into questionable neighborhoods where he probably shouldn't have gone. He went there because sometimes he found young men and women who were working very hard to improve their lives, working so hard in fact that they deprived themselves in the here and now for the slim chance to improve their future.

It was these highly-motivated people who were of special interest to Mark, as they were willing to risk almost everything they had today to help ensure a better future tomorrow, these kindred spirits who looked toward the bright future with so much enthusiasm that in fact they cared little of their present surroundings.

It had been a good day for Mark, meeting several people who expressed interest in his work and who promised they would attend a Patriot Corps meeting and/or look at the PatriotCorps.org website.

Bare Liberty

It was getting late, so Mark turned to start heading back toward his pickup parked a number of blocks away so he could make it home in time for dinner.

Mark walked down the narrow frontage street which was separated from a highway by a tall masonry wall which provided a sound barrier between the highway and the neighborhood.

Several vacant houses were nestled in-between the occupied houses and spare lots which contained a fair amount of overgrown vegetation.

Something shiny caught his eye in the patch of grass near the edge of the broken sidewalk, in front of some bushes. Bending over, which he could finally do again since both of his hips had been replaced with artificial joints, he picked up an 1853 silver dollar which had been seemingly tossed in the gutter.

As Mark looked down at the coin in his right hand that he had just picked up, he realized the coin was a metaphor for the country, declining in parallel as fundamental principles of honest money and fundamental principles of honest American government were both carelessly tossed aside.

Over time, each became as hollow shells of their former selves; the words describing them were retained, but the substance which had originally inspired those words had been long since counterfeited.

1853 was the year when Congress first violated fundamental monetary principles and foolishly removed some seven percent of the silver from the smaller silver coins: the fifty-cent piece, the quarter, dime and half-dime, while the dollar coin was left unchanged.

It was proper for Congress to again address the gold-to-silver ratio, because the California gold rush had reversed the gold-to-silver ratio, essentially reverting back to 1792 standards from the 1834 modification. Sadly the Congress in 1853 went about it all wrong.

In 1853, as in 1834, Congress decided to take out some of the more-valuable metal to equate gold and silver again to world market rates, because silver coins had now disappeared from the marketplace due to more-plentiful gold.

But Congress lightened only the smaller silver coins: they evidently didn't want to change the silver dollar. That was perhaps understandable, because after all, the dollar was the standard unit in the measure of value and so it shouldn't be changed.

However, if Congress had also removed the same proportional amount of silver from the dollar coin, then silver would have been saved as a monetary metal, even as the 'dollar' unit would have necessarily taken a hit.

Better would have it have been to leave alone both the 'dollar' and the metal which composed it — silver — and again only change the gold coins, back to their 1792 standards.

This was because, by leaving alone the dollar coin while removing silver from the smaller coins, no longer were all silver coins strictly proportional in their weight as they were proportional in their stated value.

The necessary consequence of this violation of the soundest of monetary principles — the severing of proportional value from proportional weight — was the beginning of silver's decline from continued use as a monetary metal, even as it was rightfully becoming more valuable again due to the large influx of California gold.

Silver coins were now like having a one-pound weight for use on a balance scale at its honest weight, but then shaving one ounce off the half-pound physical weight to actually weigh only seven ounces instead of eight, and shaving a half-ounce off the quarter-pound weight to now weigh but three and a half ounces instead of four.

Obviously, the pound unit with its fractions could no longer serve as a useful unit of weight and the marketplace would necessarily have to look elsewhere for a proportional system of weights.

Some of the damage of disproportionally-weighted coins was limited by Congress as they limited the legal tender quality of the lightened coins to payments of five dollars or less.

But again it would have been better for Congress to have simply put back all the gold they took out in 1834, back to its 1792 standard, for then none of the silver coins would have needed modification and silver could have maintained its gloried monetary position as found throughout history all while the dollar was left alone.

Of course, making gold coins now suddenly worth *less* monetary value would prove more difficult politically in 1853 than it had been to make gold coins worth *more* money in 1834, where the full-weight 1792 eagle became legally valued in 1834 at \$10.665 — when every pennyweight amount of gold at the old 1792 standard of purity of .9166-fine was valued monetarily at 94.8 cents.

Although a *pennyweight* is perhaps the least-familiar unit in the troy weight system, a pennyweight being 24 grains, with 20 pennyweights equating to one troy ounce, it is not the specific unit of value chosen which was important. What was important was the principle that a determinable amount of gold, every pennyweight amount of a particular standard of gold — every 24 grains of gold at the old standard of 916.6/1,000^{ths} fineness — was being made worth a specific dollar amount, of 94.8 cents.

But the practical necessity of needing to occasionally regulate the legal value between two precious metals *both legally-tied to the same monetary unit* imposes upon Congress the political necessity of being willing to act, along with the proper wisdom of knowing when to do so.

If they lacked the will or skill, then only one metal should have been chosen for our money, following the 1782 recommendations of Robert Morris, Superintendent of Finance under the Articles of Confederation, so “the scale by which every thing is to be measured” will be able “to be as fixed as the nature of things will permit.”

In 1853, even if they didn't fully understand all the implications of their actions, Congress tipped the scales toward a single-metal monetary system, of gold, valued in dollars, as silver took a legal hit and began necessarily taking a back seat in monetary transactions.

Of course, the incompetent actions of the 1853 Congress were nothing like the truly despicable intentional actions of the 1933 Congress supporting gold confiscation or the 1965 Congress removing silver from our coins and substituted in them a base-metal concoction of copper and nickel as would any counterfeiter.

Mark soon received his answer of why he found an 1853 dollar in the nearby gutter; for when he looked up again he found Adam Ramsey standing in front of him, coming out of the nearby bushes.

"I see you found the coin I tossed there for you to find," stated Adam. "I knew a silver dollar would catch your eye."

"Adam?" Mark offered, at first startled. "I cannot say that I am pleased to see you, given the choices you've made. I guess I cannot even remember your real name."

"It is Terry Runco," he answered, knowing authorities already had his name.

"Yes," said Mark. "You must know that you hurt Bethany, terribly. She was quite vulnerable and you took unforgiveable advantage of her, evidently just so you could cause me harm."

"No, I also took advantage of her because she is so hot and was a whole lot of fun in the sack," answered Terry, as Mark instinctively lunged forward at him in response to the words he heard. But the agile young man was expecting such a reaction out of Mark, which was of course the very reason the older man was being goaded.

Terry jumped back, offering, "I was just pulling your chain, just to have a little fun. Calm down, so we can talk. Actually, I do feel a little bit bad about hurting Bethany. Under different circumstances, I would have liked to get to know her better."

“Why are you here?” asked Mark. “I believe the police would like to question you.”

“The police should be looking for me, if they knew everything I have done, which they don’t,” replied Terry. “I’m here to finish my job which changed after I failed to get you hooked on drugs.”

“What do you mean?” asked Mark.

“Well,” began Terry. “Once I failed in my first job, getting you strung out on drugs, my real employer, Charles Cunningham the seventh, gave me one more chance.”

“Charles Cunningham, the seventh?” asked Mark. “You mean a descendant of Charles Cunningham the third, who my fourth great-grandfather helped show had fomented the Civil War?”

“Precisely,” answered Terry. “And also the father-in-law to Alexis Roberts who later married his son, Charles “Duke” Cunningham, VIII; the same Alexis Roberts who used to work at the law firm of Jamison, Smythe, and Kendall in Tacoma. Remember, she gave your monetary paper to the U.S. Attorney’s office, after the government confiscated the lost gold you found which once belonged to your great-grandfather, that un-American traitor who failed to turn in his gold to the government in 1933 when he was commanded?”

“Small world, I guess,” answered Mark, unaware of his present danger and choosing not to challenge Terry’s historical misstatements about who was required to turn in gold and even ignoring Terry’s pointed slam on Mark’s great-grandfather. Since Terry obviously found pleasure in provoking Mark, Mark thought it best not to provide him with any added pleasure by becoming emotionally-involved.

“Yes, Charles gave me an offer I couldn’t refuse,” Terry stated. “Either be killed for failing my assignment, or step up and take a larger assignment. It was really a no-brainer, as I really preferred to be promoted rather than killed.

“Thus the plan to discredit you was altered, only now Jamie Jeffers would have to pay the price for my mistake. And that was too bad, because I also liked Jamie a lot. She was a whole lot of fun and we got to enjoy each other’s company on many occasions, even sometimes after I had just enjoyed your step-daughter.”

With that admission, Mark instinctively lunged at Terry again, but Terry was much too quick for the old man. Terry was enjoying his cat-and-mouse game, at least as long as he had the upper hand and was able to play the cat. But Terry knew that he had a job to finish, and the longer they stood there, the more likely something unexpected could interfere with his plans.

As Terry again jumped back out of Mark’s reach, this time he simultaneously pulled out a 9 mm semi-automatic pistol, stopping Mark from further advancement. “Whoa there partner, settle down. I am not done talking to you yet,” he said to Mark, keeping his weapon aimed directly at Mark’s chest.

Seeing the gun and being yet too far away from Terry to do anything about it, Mark relented, as Terry began talking again.

“As I was saying before I was so rudely interrupted, Charles gave me the choice of either killing Jamie or being killed myself. Obviously I chose the former, as I very much wanted to remain alive.”

“You killed Jamie?” Mark asked, starting to put together the pieces, even as he found it difficult to believe someone he once considered a friend could actually be so evil, now talking so calmly about killing a human being — a friend, even a lover.

“But before I killed Jamie later that night, first I had beaten her with her own permission and then I nominally ‘raped’ her, so together we could both frame *you*. Of course, I wore a condom so I wouldn’t leave behind any evidence for the examiners to find. And Jamie even seemed to like me being so aggressive with her, that even her intense pain yet provided both of us with extreme pleasure.

“And later Jamie was even worried about me visiting her in the hospital in case I was seen, but I told her that I just had one last thing I had to do and that I wouldn’t stay long.

“I was able to inject poison into her I.V. without her noticing, first putting her to sleep, then inducing coma before her body totally shut down.

“I have to admit, my first killing shocked me,” Terry admitted. “Not because it was so hard, but actually because it was so easy and even more so because it was thrilling. Total dominion over someone else is very intoxicating, so much better than alcohol, drugs, or even sex. Actually, it was even better killing someone who had willingly just given me great sex only hours earlier, who now welcomed me back, only for me to then kill her.”

“Your *first* killing?” Mark was able to get out, before figuring out that Terry must have also killed Stan Bogelman and Mike Holladay.

“I can see you now realize that I also killed Stan and Mike, as well as your sex double Art Black down in California, after your investigators began closing in on him,” Terry offered. “And now I see you finally understand that I’m telling you all this so I can get a bigger thrill out of killing you next.”

Mark had no time to try and process that information, but simply react, more aggressively than he had ever acted in his lifetime.

Mark sprinted the few yards toward Terry with all the speed and determination he could possible muster, but Terry was easily able to act much more quickly, and he begin firing rounds point-blank into Mark’s chest. Nevertheless Mark did not immediately stop, so neither did Terry, with Terry being able to get off four rounds into the mass moving his way.

Mark wasn’t sure where he had been hit, but he realized that his life on this earth could perhaps be coming to a quick end. He didn’t have time to decide whether to go for Terry’s gun to stop the flow of bullets coming at him, or in essence to go straight for the jugular.

Without realizing it, Mark chose the latter. Perhaps he would not have the power or ability to stop his killer from killing him, but that didn't prevent Mark from doing everything in his own power to at least try and take this evil killer with him.

With what could easily be the last remaining effort of his body, Mark was able to grab the back of Terry's ample head of hair with his left hand and violently rotate that hand toward him while he simultaneously thrust his open right palm into Terry's jaw with a vicious twisting action of that jaw...up, up and away...with a little added tilting of the head thrown in for good measure.

Terry's top two cervical vertebrae in his neck — his atlas and axis vertebrae — were given their final chiropractic adjustment of a lifetime, to someone fully-deserving of the end result, a true rotary break.

Terry's now-limp body immediately fell to the ground with a resounding thud which Mark had not witnessed since his youth when one of the family steers was butchered, after it was felled with a single 22-calibre bullet right between the eyes.

With Mark's assailant falling to the ground and from Mark's forward momentum, Mark lost his balance and fell head-over-heels over Terry's twisted body, hitting his own head on the pavement in the process.

As Mark's right hand went flaccid, the Seated Liberty dollar which was still in his hand and which had left an impression on Terry's jaw rolled out onto the concrete before it began a slow, downward spiral, ending finally with a longer-resonating, higher-frequency 'ping', helping let any trader within earshot know that the coin was sound, that it had admirably passed an impromptu ring test for authenticity.

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Clark County Sheriff's Detective Bobby Fosgren stood on the porch as Penny answered the knock at the door.

When Penny first saw him, she thought he must have more information on the old case. While she was right about new information, tragically he was not really there about the old case.

"Mrs. Evanston," the detective began, with a look on his face which admitted his difficult internal struggle to find the proper words. "May I come in? I have some bad news, and I wanted to give it to you in person."

Penny knew nothing other than Mark was late, but she started sobbing uncontrollably, motioning for the detective to come in because she couldn't find the words to express her intentions.

Sitting at the table, the detective began filling Penny in on her husband being shot four times by Terry Runco, a.k.a. Adam Ramsey, whom Mark was able to kill.

"Thankfully, the bulletproof t-shirt Mark wore under his colonial patriot outfit saved his life, although his body camera also took a direct hit, which may have also helped save him," Detective Fosgren stated.

"Oh thank the Lord; He must have more in store for Mark here on this earth!" Penny exclaimed, finding her words in newfound optimism. "Although I guess I also have Steve and Randy Frederickson to thank for insisting he wear a light-weight bullet-proof shirt they got for him to wear as part of the recent enhanced security protocols."

"As I said, Mark's camera took a direct hit, so we're not sure that we can retrieve any information from it, but technicians will nevertheless try.

"Mark is at the hospital. Three of the gun shots hit Mark in the chest where his protective shirt he was wearing saved him from everything but internal bruising.

“But the final shot hit him in his right thigh, which will take time to heal. But the doctor expects Mark to make a full recovery. They don’t think the bump on his head is much direct concern.

“If you would like a ride to the hospital, I’d be happy to take you there,” offered the detective.

“I’ll take you up on that offer, as I’m not so sure I’d be able to drive right now,” Penny nervously admitted. “Let me just grab a few things, in case I’m there for a while.”

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Technicians were not able to retrieve any of the information from Mark’s body camera. Charles Cunningham, VII thus got a ‘get-out-of-jail-free’ card even though his hired gun had arrogantly provided an incriminating confession against his boss, the powerful financier. The killer had been so arrogant and so sure of himself that he hadn’t cared Mark was wearing a body camera, planning simply to take the camera with him and destroy it after he finished the immediate task at hand.

Terry Runco’s 9 mm gun used on Mark proved to be a perfect match for the murders of Stan Bogelman, Mike Holladay and Art Black.

Steve Frederickson later contemplated taking matters into his own hands and going after Charles Cunningham directly, but his brother Randy guessed what Steve was thinking and was able to talk him out of it.

“I am certainly not going to help you murder somebody, but neither will I just stand idly by and watch you ruin your life,” Randy said. “So if you’re going to kill Cunningham, you’re going to have to go through me first.

Bare Liberty

“We cannot ever descend to our opponent’s depravity. If we do, then they win, as you well know. We must maintain our standards, especially when it is the most difficult. I know in many ways it seems tougher on us to keep our principles and fight evil when our opponents pull every trick in the book and fight us without any measure of compunction whatsoever.

“Naïve people claim that is why evil wins, because they don’t ever hold back. But that is why they will always lose, because they don’t push themselves to aspire to anything beyond themselves, they end up simply taking the lowest fruit which is ripest for the easiest-picking.

“Evil people are inherently lazy at heart, too incompetent to ever earn their own way, all on their own.

“That is why evil people cannot ever be truly happy, and why they are always searching for what they cannot ever find, because they aren’t ever willing to *earn* it.

“Earning anything is beyond their comprehension. They are mere opportunists who simply take what they want whenever they can, mostly from victims who aren’t always able to easily defend themselves.

“But we’re far better than evil, for we adhere to a much higher standard and can still win. We simply need to be ever-determined and always patient; to keep moving forward until we’ve completed the task in front of us, every time, without fail.

“Mark was able to relay to us what Terry Runco had admitted to him, informing us of the identity of the mastermind who was behind stopping Mark and the Patriot Corps.

“That is information that we’ve never before had, so that is important and helps level the playing field.

“But even though there are many others of Cunningham’s persuasion out there that we don’t know about, we still have the edge because Mark has shown us *how* they have all successfully operated, for the last 200 years. Thus to stop them now, we finally no longer even need to know *who* they are, *only how they operate*.

“With that ultra-important bit of knowledge, of finally knowing *how* they operate, we can shut all of them down, forevermore, all at once and once and for all.

“We now have the blueprint on how they work and we now have the blueprint we need on how to stop them — we simply need to now step up our efforts to push forward with our Once and For All Amendment, *every creative way we can* until it is ratified.

“We must independently Build Awareness of Republic Knowledge, so together we may Restore Our American Republic. In other words, we must independently B.A.R.K., so together we may R.O.A.R. We must expose government deception as a lie.

“Each of us must simply find our voice and cast it out everywhere we go, to everyone we meet. We are to provide the effort; God will determine the results. We simply find a sustainable pace that won’t lead to our burn out, and we don’t ever stop barking and roaring until the necessary task at hand is accomplished and the danger has passed.

“We must expose corrupt government as but the monumental fraud which it is, so it stands naked before the world for all to see.

“The answer is to become informed and then become personally involved. The Patriot Corps can help people do both — to help people find their voice. But even if the Patriot Corps were not there, Americans are a creative and dedicated bunch, and they can now each find their way to restoring our American republic, or, a million different manifestations of the proper way of restoring it.

“The truth is now out there and in the public domain, and the truth shall set us free.”

The End

Author's Post Script:

While ***Bare Liberty*** is a work of fiction, its primary message exposing government deception is not (although Chapter Eight's storyline on the cause of the Civil War is fabricated to show intentional design rather than perhaps mere opportunism).

If ***Bare Liberty*** is to have any chance to help regain limited government under the whole Constitution, it will be necessary for readers who found it informative to encourage others to read it.

The author therefore asks readers to consider recommending the ***Bald Justice*** novel series (including ***Bald Justice***, ***Base Tyranny*** and now ***Bare Liberty***) and the non-fiction works ***Patriot Quest***, ***Dollars and nonCents***, and ***Monetary Laws of the United States*** to their family, friends, and contacts.

For further information on America's monetary laws, study guides on the Constitution, and related matters, please see www.PatriotCorps.org.



Restoring Our American Republic, Once and For All



About the Author:

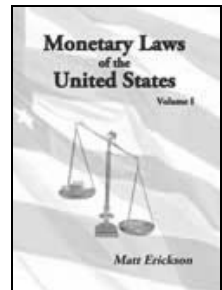
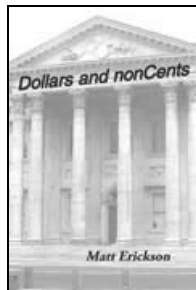
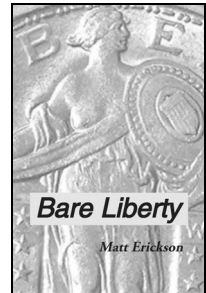
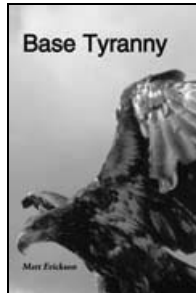
Matt Erickson is a truck driver and lives in Vancouver, Washington, with his wife. He has two step-kids and seven grandchildren.

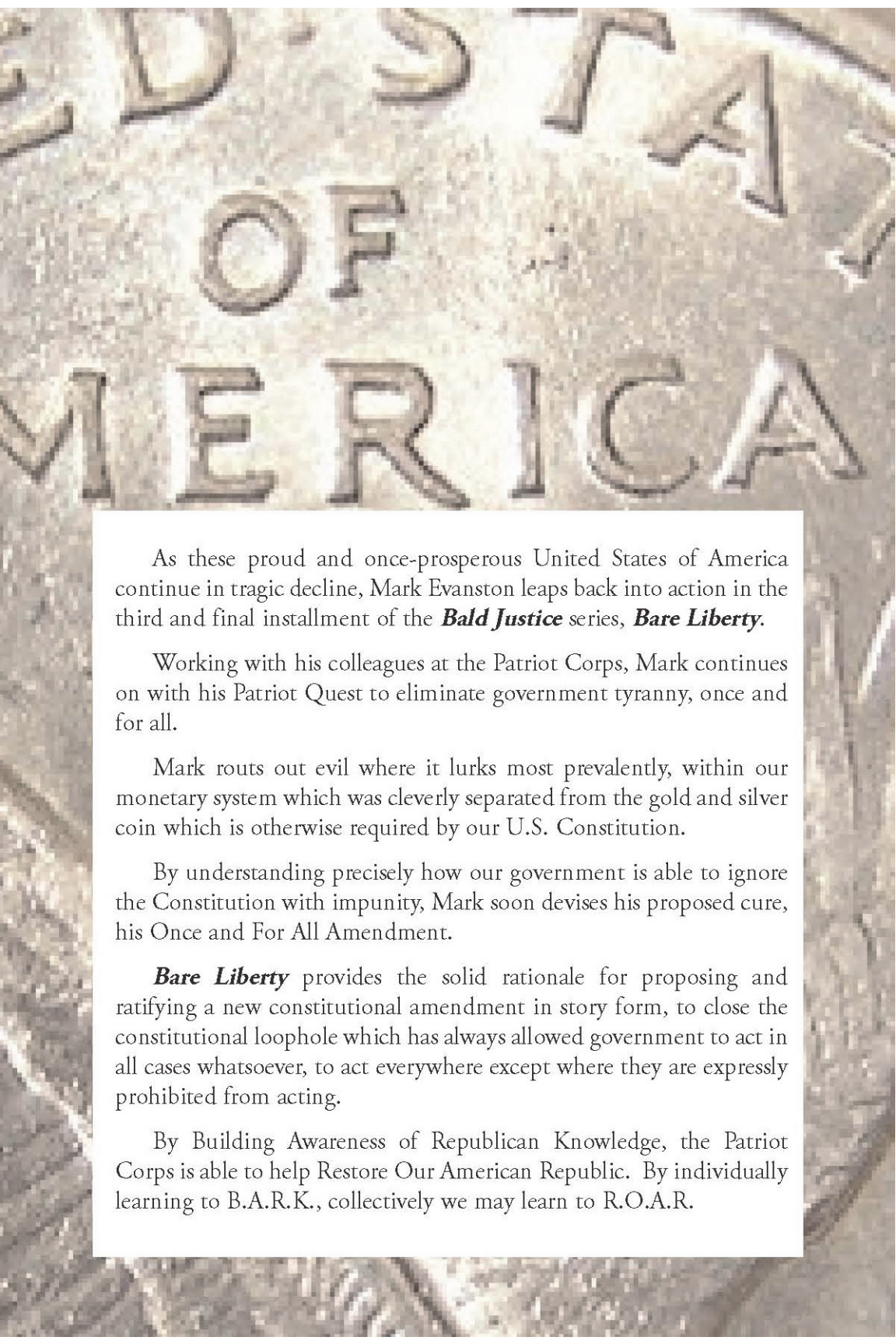
He is the Founder and President of Patriot Corps and the Foundation For Liberty.

www.PatriotCorps.org

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Erickson is the author of the fiction novels ***Bald Justice***, ***Base Tyranny*** and ***Bare Liberty*** and the non-fiction books ***Patriot Quest***, ***Dollars and nonCents***, and ***Monetary Laws of the United States***.





As these proud and once-prosperous United States of America continue in tragic decline, Mark Evanston leaps back into action in the third and final installment of the **Bald Justice** series, **Bare Liberty**.

Working with his colleagues at the Patriot Corps, Mark continues on with his Patriot Quest to eliminate government tyranny, once and for all.

Mark routs out evil where it lurks most prevalently, within our monetary system which was cleverly separated from the gold and silver coin which is otherwise required by our U.S. Constitution.

By understanding precisely how our government is able to ignore the Constitution with impunity, Mark soon devises his proposed cure, his Once and For All Amendment.

Bare Liberty provides the solid rationale for proposing and ratifying a new constitutional amendment in story form, to close the constitutional loophole which has always allowed government to act in all cases whatsoever, to act everywhere except where they are expressly prohibited from acting.

By Building Awareness of Republican Knowledge, the Patriot Corps is able to help Restore Our American Republic. By individually learning to B.A.R.K., collectively we may learn to R.O.A.R.